









# TRAVELS

TO DISCOVER THE

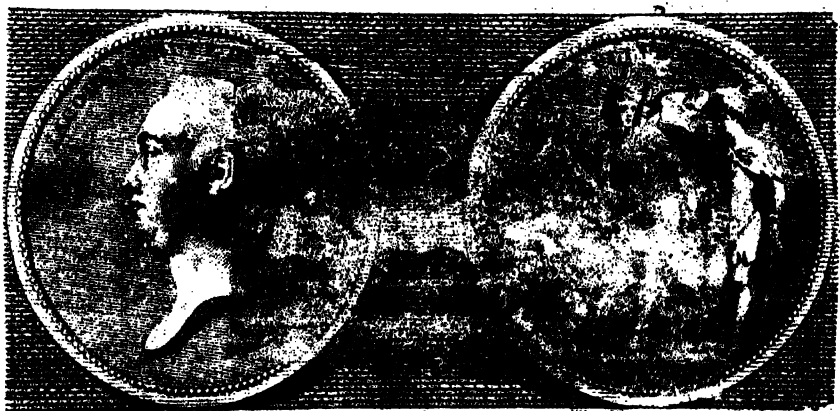
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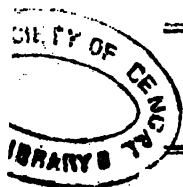
In the Years 1768, 1769, 1770, 1771 N T S

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

BY JAMES BRUCE OF KINNAIRD, ESQ. F.R.S.



VOL. III.



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*Nilus in extremum fugit perterritus orbem,  
Occulitque caput, quod adhuc latet.*

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Ovid. Metam.

EDINBURGH:  
PRINTED BY J. RUTHVEN,  
FOR G. G. J. AND J. ROBINSON, PATERNOSTER-ROW,  
LONDON.



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# C O N T E N T S

OF THE

## T H I R D V O L U M E.

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ACCOUNT OF MY JOURNEY FROM MASUAH TO GONDAR—  
TRANSACTIONS THERE—MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF  
THE ABYSSINIANS.

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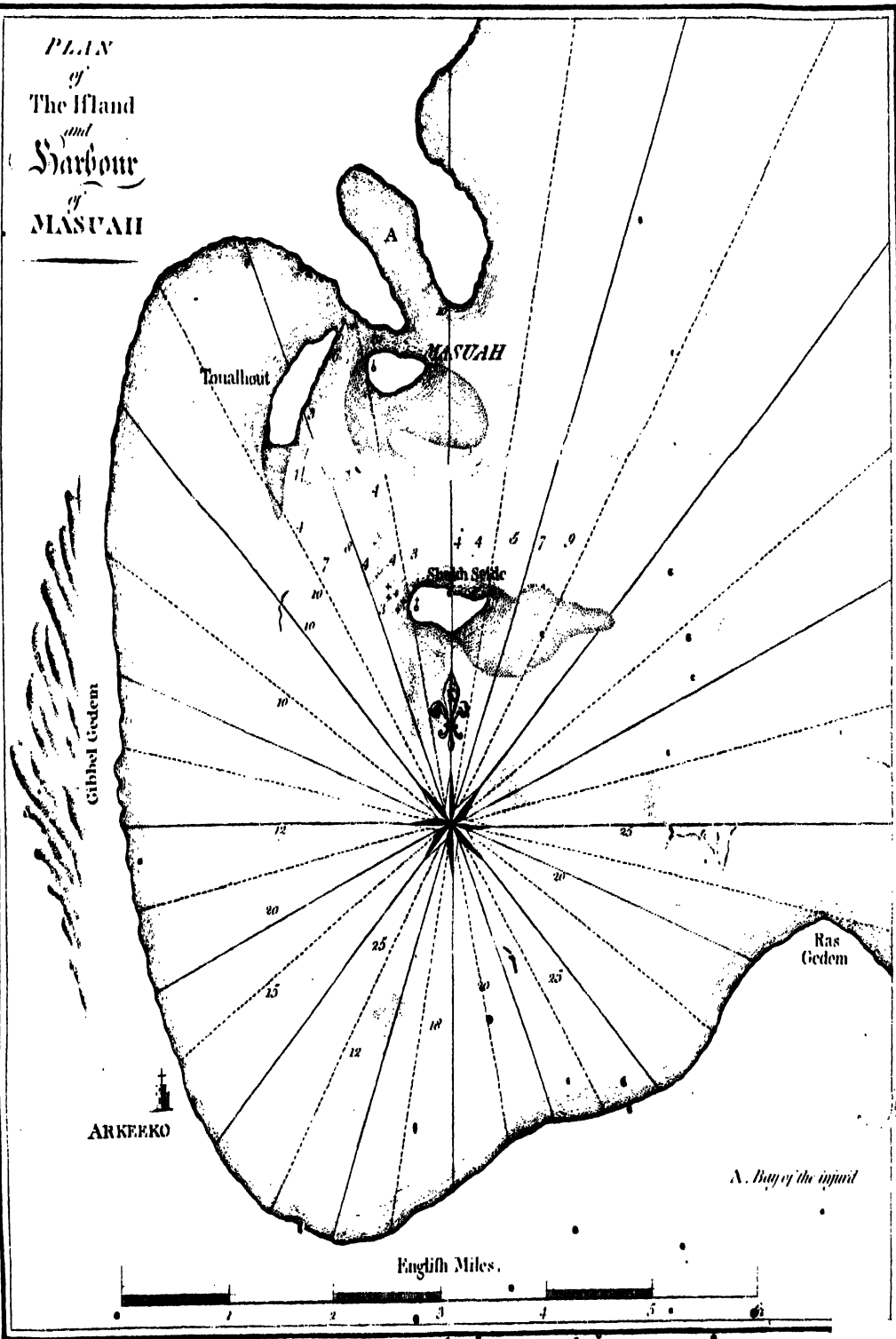
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TRAVELS



PLAN  
of  
The Island  
and  
Harbour  
of  
MASUAH



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# T R A V E L S

TO DISCOVER

## THE SOURCE OF THE NILE.

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### B O O K V.

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ACCOUNT OF MY JOURNEY FROM MASUAH TO GONDAR—  
TRANSACTIONS THERE—MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE  
ABYSSINIANS.

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#### C H A P. I.

*Transactions at Masuah and Arkeeko.*

MASUAH, which means the port or harbour of the  
Shepherds, is a small island immediately on the Abyf-  
finian shore, having an excellent harbour, and water deep  
enough for ships of any size to the very edge of the island:  
here they may ride in the utmost security, from whatever  
point, or with whatever degree of strength, the wind blows.  
As it takes its modern, so it received its ancient name from  
its harbour. It was called by the Greeks *Sebasticum Os*, from



the capacity of its port, which is distributed into three divisions. The island itself is very small, scarce three quarters of a mile in length, and about half that in breadth, one-third occupied by houses, one by cisterns to receive the rain-water, and the last is reserved for burying the dead.

MASUAH, as we have already observed, was one of those towns on the west of the Red Sea that followed the conquest of Arabia Felix by Sinan Basba, under Sélîm emperor of Constantinople. At that time it was a place of great commerce, possessing a share of the Indian trade in common with the other ports of the Red Sea near the mouth of the Indian Ocean. It had a considerable quantity of exports brought to it from a great tract of mountainous country behind it, in all ages very inhospitable, and almost inaccessible to strangers. Gold and ivory, elephants and buffaloes hides, and, above all, slaves, of much greater value, as being more sought after for their personal qualities than any other sort, who had the misfortune to be reduced to that condition, made the principal articles of exportation from this port. Pearls, considerable for size, water, and colour, were found all along its coast. The great convenience of commodious riding for vessels, joined to these valuable articles of trade, had overcome the inconvenience of want of water, the principal necessary of life, to which it had been subjected from its creation.

MASUAH continued a place of much resort as long as commerce flourished, but it fell into obscurity very suddenly under the oppression of the Turks, who put the finishing-hand to the ruin of the India trade in the Red Sea, begun some years before by the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope,

## THE SOURCE OF THE NILE.

3

Hope, and the settlements made by the Portuguese on the continent of India.

THE first government of Masuah under the Turks was by a basha sent from Constantinople, and from thence, for a time, the conquest of Abyssinia was attempted, always with great confidence, though never with any degree of success; so that, losing its value as a garrison, and, at the same time, as a place of trade, it was thought no longer worth while to keep up so expensive an establishment as that of a bashalik.

THE principal auxiliary, when the Turks conquered the place, was a tribe of Mahometans called Belowee, shepherds inhabiting the coast of the Red Sea under the mountains the Habab, about lat. 14°. In reward for this assistance, the Turks gave their chief the civil government of Masuah and its territory, under the title of Naybe of Masuah; and, upon the basha's being withdrawn, this officer remained in fact sovereign of the place, though, to save appearances, he held it of the grand signior for an annual tribute, upon receiving a firman from the Ottoman Porte.

THE body of Janizaries, once established there in garrison, were left in the island, and their pay continued to them from Constantinople. These marrying the women of the country, their children succeeded them in their place and pay as Janizaries; but being now, by their intermarriages, Moors, and natives of Masuah, they became of course relations to each other, and always subject to the influence of the Naybe.

THE Naybe finding the great distance he was from his protectors, the Turks in Arabia, on the other side of the Red Sea, whose garrisons were every day decaying in strength, and for the most part reduced; sensible, too, how much he was in the power of the Abyssinians, his enemies and nearest neighbours, began to think that it was better to secure himself at home, by making some advances to those in whose power he was. Accordingly it was agreed between them, that one half of the customs should be paid by him to the king of Abyssinia, who was to suffer him to enjoy his government unmolested; for Masuah, as I have before said, is absolutely destitute of water; neither can it be supplied with any sort of provisions but from the mountainous country of Abyssinia.

THE same may be said of Arkeeko, a large town on the bottom of the bay of Masuah, which has indeed water, but labours under the same scarcity of provisions; for the tract of flat land behind both, called Samhar, is a perfect desert, and only inhabited from the month of November to April, by a variety of wandering tribes called Tora, Hazorta, Shiho, and Doba, and these carry all their cattle to the Abyssinian side of the mountains when the rains fall there, which is the opposite six months. When the season is thus reversed, they and their cattle are no longer in Samhar, or the dominion of the Naybe, but in the hands of the Abyssinians, especially the governor of Tigré and Baharnagash, who thereby, without being at the expence and trouble of marching against Masuah with an army, can make a line round it, and starve all at Arkeeko and Masuah, by prohibiting any sort of provisions to be carried thither from their side. In the course of this history we have seen this practised with great

great success more than once, especially against the Naybe Mufa in the reign of Yafous I.

THE friendship of Abyssinia once secured, and the power of the Turks declining daily in Arabia, the Naybe began by degrees to withdraw himself from paying tribute at all to the basha of Jidda, to whose government his had been annexed by the porte. He therefore received the firman as a mere form, and returned trifling presents, but no tribute; and in troublesome times, or a weak government happening in Tigrè, he withdrew himself equally from paying any consideration, either to the basha in name of tribute, or to the king of Abyssinia, as share of the customs. This was precisely his situation when I arrived in Abyssinia. A great revolution, as we have already seen, had happened in that kingdom, of which Michael had been the principal author. When he was called to Gondar and made minister there, Tigrè remained drained of troops, and without a governor.

NOR WAS the new king, Hatzè Hannes, whom Michael had placed upon the throne after the murder of Joas his predecessor, a man likely to infuse vigour into the new government. Hannes was past seventy at his accession, and Michael his minister lame, so as scarcely to be able to stand, and within a few years of eighty. The Naybe, a man of about forty-eight, judged of the debility of the Abyssinian government by those circumstances, but in this he was mistaken.

ALREADY Michael had intimated to him, that, the next campaign, he would lay waste Arkeeko and Masuah, till they should be as desert as the wilds of Samhar; and as he had been all his life very remarkable for keeping his prom-

tes of this kind, the stranger merchants had many of them fled to Arabia, and others to Dobarwa\*, a large town in the territories of the Baharnagash. Notwithstanding this, the Naybe had not shewn any public mark of fear, nor sent one penny either to the king of Abyssinia or the basha of Jidda.

ON the other hand, the basha was not indifferent to his own interest; and, to bring about the payment, he had made an agreement with an officer of great credit with the Sherriſſe of Mecca. This man was originally an Abyssinian slave, his name Metical Aga, who by his address had raised himself to the post of Seliſtar, or *ſword-bearer*, to the Sherriſſe; and, in fact, he was absolute in all his dominions. He was, moreover, a great friend of Michael governor of Tigré, and had supplied him with large stores of arms and ammunition for his last campaign against the king at Gondar.

THE basha had employed Metical Aga to inform Michael of the treatment he had received from the Naybe, desiring his assistance to force him to pay the tribute, and at the same time intimated to the Naybe, that he not only had done so, but the very next year would give orders throughout Arabia to arrest the goods and persons of such Mahometan merchants as should come to Arabia, either from motives of religion or trade. With this message he had sent the firman from Constantinople, desiring the return both of tribute and presents.

MAHO-

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\* Supposed from its name to have been formerly the capital of the Dobas.

MAHOMET GIBBERTI, Metical Aga's servant, had come in the boat with me ; but Abdelcader, who carried the message and firman, and who was governor of the island of Dabalac, had sailed at same time with me, and had been spectator of the honour which was paid my ship when she left the harbour of Jidda.

RUNNING straight over to Masuah, Abdelcader had proclaimed what he had seen with great exaggeration, according to the custom of his country ; and reported that a prince was coming, a very near relation to the king of England, who was no trader, but came only to visit countries and people.

It was many times, and oft agitated (as we knew afterwards) between the Naybe and his counsellors, what was to be done with this prince. Some were for the most expeditious, and what has long been the most customary method of treating strangers in Masuah, to put them to death, and divide every thing they had among the garrison. Others insisted, that they should stay and see what letters I had from Arabia to Abyssinia, lest this might prove an addition to the storm just ready to break upon them on the part of Metical Aga and Michael Suhul.

BUT Achmet, the Naybe's nephew, said, it was folly to doubt but that a man; under the description I was, would have protections of every kind ; but whether I had or not, that my very rank should protect me in every place where there was any government whatever ; it might do even among banditti and thieves inhabiting woods and mountains ; that a sufficient quantity of strangers blood had been already

ready fled at Masuah, for the purpose of rapine, and he believed a curse and poverty had followed it; that it was impossible for those who had heard the firing of those ships to conjecture whether I had letters to Abyssinia or not; that it would be better to consider whether I was held in esteem by the captains of those ships, as half of the guns they fired in compliment to me, was sufficient to destroy them all, and lay Arkecko and Masuah as desolate as Michael Suhul had threatened to do; nor could that vengeance cost any of the ships, coming next year to Jidda, a day's sailing out of their way; and there being plenty of water when they reached Arkecko at the south-west of the bay, all this destruction might be effected in one afternoon, and repeated once a-year without difficulty, danger, or expence, while they were watering.

ACHMET, therefore, declared it was his resolution that I should be received with marks of consideration, till upon inspecting my letters, and conversing with me, they might see what sort of man I was, and upon what errand I was come; but even if I was a trader, and no priest or Frank, such as came to disturb the peace of the country, he would not then consent to any personal injury being done me; if I was indeed a priest, or one of those Franks, *Gebennim*, they might send me to hell if they chose; but he, for his part, would not, even then have any thing to do with it.

BEFORE our vessel appeared, they came to these conclusions; and though I have supposed that hoisting the colours and saluting me with guns had brought me into this danger, on the other hand it may be said, perhaps with greater reason,

reason, they were the means Providence kindly used to save my life in that slaughter-house of strangers.

ACHMET's father had been Naybe before, and, of course, the sovereignty, upon the present incumbent's death, was to devolve on him. And what made this less invidious, the sons of the present Naybe had all been swept away by the small-pox; so that Achmet was really, at any rate, to be considered as his son and successor. Add to this, the Naybe had received a stroke of the palsy, which deprived him of the use of one of his sides, and greatly impeded his activity, unless in his schemes of doing ill; but I could not perceive, when intending mischief, that he laboured under any infirmity. All this gave Achmet sovereign influence, and it was therefore agreed the rest should be only spectators, and that my fate should be left to him.

ACHMET was about twenty-five years of age, or perhaps younger; his stature near five-feet four; he was feebly made, a little bent forward or stooping, thin, long-faced, long-necked; small, but tolerably well-limbed, agile and active enough in his motions, though of a figure by no means athletic; he had a broad forehead, thick black eye-brows, black eyes, an aquiline nose, thin lips, and fine teeth; and, what is very rare in that country, and much desired, a thick curled beard. This man was known to be very brave in his person, but exceedingly prone to anger. A near relation to the Bahar-nagash having said something impertinent to him while he was altering the pin of his tent, which his servant had not placed to his mind, in a passion he struck the Abyssinian with a wooden mallet, and killed him on the spot and although this, was in the Abyssinian territory, by getting



nimbly on horseback, he arrived at Arkeeko without being intercepted, though closely pursued almost to the town.

It was the 19th of September 1769 when we arrived at Masuah, very much tired of the sea, and desirous to land. But, as it was evening, I thought it adviseable to sleep on board all night, that we might have a whole day (as the first is always a busy one) before us, and receive in the night any intelligence from friends, who might not choose to venture to come openly to see us in the day, at least before the determination of the *Naybe* had been heard concerning us.

MAHOMET GIBBERTI, a man whom we had perfectly secured, and who was fully instructed in our suspicions as to the *Naybe*, and the manner we had resolved to behave to him, went ashore that evening; and, being himself an Abyssinian, having connections in Masuah, dispatched that same night to Adowa, capital of Tigrè, those letters which I knew were to be of the greatest importance; giving our friend Janni (a Greek, confidential servant of Michael, governor of Tigrè) advice that we were arrived, had letters of Metical Aga to the *Naybe* and Ras Michael; as also Greek letters to him from the Greek patriarch of Cairo, a duplicate of which I sent by the bearer. We wrote likewise to him in Greek, that we were afraid of the *Naybe*, and begged him to send to us instantly some man of confidence, who might protect us, or at least be a spectator of what should befall us. We, besides, instructed him to advise the court of Abyssinia, that we were friends of Metical Aga, had letters from him to the king and the Ras, and distrusted the *Naybe* of Masuah.

MAHOMET GIBBERTI executed this commission in the instant, with all the punctuality of an honest man, who was faithful

faithful to the instructions of his master, and was independent of every person else. He applied to Mahomet Adulai, (a person kept by Ras Michael as a spy upon the Naybe, and in the same character by Medical Aga); and Adulai, that very night, dispatched a trusty messenger, with many of whom he was constantly provided. This messenger, charged with our dispatches, having a friend and correspondent of his own among the Shiho, passed, by ways best known to himself, and was safely escorted by his own friends till the fifth day, when he arrived at the customhouse of Adowa, and there delivered our dispatches to our friend Janni.

At Cairo, as I have already mentioned, I met with my friend father Christopher, who introduced me to the Greek patriarch, Mark. This patriarch had told me, that there were of his communion, to the number of about twenty, men in Abyssinia; some of them were good men and becoming rich in the way of trade; some of them had fled from the severity of the Turks, after having been detected by them in intimacy with Mahometan women; but all of them were in a great degree of credit at the court of Abyssinia, and possessing places under government greatly beyond his expectation. To these he wrote letters, in the manner of bulls from the pope, enjoining them, with regard to me, to obey his orders strictly, the particulars of which I shall have occasion to speak of afterwards.

JANNI, then at Adowa in Tigré, was a man of the first character for good life and morals. He had served two kings of Abyssinia with great reputation, and Michael had appointed him to the customhouse at Adowa, to superintend the affairs of the revenue there, while he himself was occu-

pied at Gondar. To him the patriarch gave his first injunctions as to watching the motives of the Naybe, and preventing any ill-usage from him, before the notice of my arrival at Masuah should reach Abyssinia.

MAHOMET ADULAI dispatched his messenger, and Mahomet Gibberti repaired that same night to the Naybe at Arkeeko, with such diligence that lulled him asleep as to any prior intelligence, which otherwise he might have thought he was charged to convey to Tigrè; and Mahomet Gibberti, in his conversation that night with Achmet, adroitly confirmed him in all the ideas he himself had first started in council with the Naybe. He told him the manner I had been received at Jidda, my protection at Constantinople, and the firman which I brought from the grand signior, the power of my countrymen in the Red Sea and India, and my personal friendship with Metical Aga. He moreover insinuated, that the coasts of the Red Sea would be in a dangerous situation if any thing happened to me, as both the sheriffe of Mecca and emperor of Constantinople would themselves, perhaps, not interfere, but would most certainly consider the place, where such disobedience should be shewn to their commands, as in a state of anarchy, and therefore to be abandoned to the just correction of the English, if injured.

ON the 20th, a person came from Mahomet Gibberti to conduct me on shore. The Naybe himself was still at Arkeeko, and Achmet therefore had come down to receive the duties of the merchandise on board the vessel which brought me. There were two elbow-chairs placed in the middle of the marketplace. Achmet sat on one of them, while the  
several

several officers opened the bales and packages before him ; the other chair on his left hand was empty.

HE was dressed all in white, in a long Banian habit of muslin, and a close-bodied frock reaching to his ankles, much like the white frock and petticoat the young children wear in England. This species of dress did not, in any way, suit Achmet's shape or size ; but, it seems, he meant to be in gala. As soon as I came in sight of him, I doubled my pace : Mahomet Gibberti's servant whispered to me, not to kiss his hand ; which indeed I intended to have done. Achmet stood up, just as I arrived within arm's length of him ; when we touched each other's hands, carried our fingers to our lips, then laid our hands cross our breasts : I pronounced the salutation of the inferior *Salam Ali-*  
*um!* Peace be between us ; to which he answered immediately, *Alicum Salam!* There is peace between us. He pointed to the chair, which I declined ; but he obliged me to sit down.

In these countries, the greater honour that is shewn you at first meeting, the more considerable present is expected : he made a sign to bring coffee directly, as the immediate offering of meat or drink is an assurance your life is not in danger. He began with an air that seemed rather serious : " We have expected you here some time ago, but thought you had changed your mind, and was gone to India." — " Since sailing from Jidda, I have been in Arabia Felix, the Gulf of Mocha, and crossed last from Loheia." — " Are you not afraid," said he, " so thinly attended, to venture upon these long and dangerous voyages ?" — " The countries where I have been, are either subject to the emperor of Constantinople, whose firman I have now the honour to present you,

or to the regency of Cairo, and port of Janizaries—here are their letters—or to the sherriffe of Mecca. To you, Sir, I present the sherriffe's letters ; and, besides these, one from Metigal Aga your friend, who, depending on your character, assured me this alone would be sufficient to preserve me from ill-usage so long as I did no wrong : as for the dangers of the road from banditti and lawless persons, my servants are indeed few, but they are veteran soldiers, tried and exercised from their infancy in arms, and I value not the superior number of cowardly and disorderly persons."

He then returned me the letters, saying, " You will give these to the Naybe to-morrow ; I will keep Metigal's letter, as it is to me, and will read it at home." He put it accordingly in his bosom ; and our coffee being done, I rose to take my leave, and was presently wet to the skin by deluges of orange flower-water showered upon me from the right and left, by two of his attendants, from silver bottles.

A VERY decent house had been provided ; and I had no sooner entered, than a large dinner was sent us by Achmet, with a profusion of lemons, and good fresh water, now become one of the greatest delicacies in life ; and, instantly after, our baggage was all sent, unopened ; with which I was very well-pleased, being afraid they might break something in my clock, telescopes, or quadrant, by the violent manner in which they satisfy their curiosity.

LATE at night I received a visit from Achmet ; he was then in an undress, his body quite naked, a barracan thrown loosely about him ; he had a pair of calico drawers ; a white coul, or cotton cap, upon his head, and had no sort of

arms whatever. I rose up to meet him, and thank him for his civility in sending my baggage; and when I observed, besides, that it was my duty to wait upon him, rather than suffer him to give himself this trouble, he took me by the hand, and we sat down on two cushions together.

"ALL that you mentioned," said he, "is perfectly good and well; but there are questions that I am going to ask you which are of consequence to yourself. When you arrived at Jidda, we heard it was a great man, a son or brother of a king, going to India. This was communicated to me, and to the Naybe, by people that saw every day the respect paid to you by the captains of the ships at Jidda. Metical Aga, in his private letter delivered to the Naybe last night by Mahomet Gibberti, among many unusual expressions, said, The day that any accident befalls this person will be looked upon by me always as the most unfortunate of my life. Now, you are a Christian, and he is a Mussulman, and these are expressions of a particular regard not used by the one when writing of the other. He says, moreover, that, in your language, the grand signior styles you Bey-Adzé, or Most Noble. Tell me, therefore, and tell me truly, Are you a prince, son, brother, or nephew of a king? Are you banished from your own country; and what is it that you seek in our's, exposing yourself to so many difficulties and dangers?"

"I AM neither son, nor brother of a king. I am private Englishman. If you, Sidi Achmet, saw my prince, the eldest, or any son of the king of England, you would then be able to form a juster idea of them, and that would forever hinder you from confounding them with common men like me. If they were to choose to appear in this part  
of

of the world, this little sea would be too narrow for their ships: Your sun, now so hot, would be darkened by their sails; and when they fired their terrible wide-mouthed cannon, not an Arab would think himself safe on the distant mountains, while the houses on the shore would totter and fall to the ground as if shaken to pieces by an earthquake. I am a servant to that king, and an inferior one in rank; only worthy of his attention from my affection to him and his family, in which I do not acknowledge any superior. Yet so far your correspondents say well: My ancestors were the kings of the country in which I was born, and to be ranked among the greatest and most glorious that ever bore the crown and title of King. This is the truth, and nothing but the truth. I may now, I hope, without offence, ask, To what does all this information tend?"

"To your safety," said he, "and to your honour, as long as I command in Masuah;—to your certain death and destruction if you go among the Abyssinians; a people without faith, covetous, barbarous, and in continual war, of which nobody yet has been able to discover the reason. But of this another time."

"Be it so," said I. "I would now speak one word in secret to you, (upon which every body was ordered out of the room): All that you have told me this evening I already know; ask me not how: but, to convince you that it is truth, I now thank you for the humane part you took against these bloody intentions others had of killing and plundering me on my arrival, upon Abdelcader governor of Dahalic's information that I was a prince, because of the

honour

nour that the English ships paid me, and that I was loaded with gold."

ULLAH Acbar! (in great surprize) "Why, you was in the middle of the sea when that passed."

"SCARCELY advanced so far, I believe; but your advice was wise, for a large English ship will wait for me all this winter in Jidda, till I know what reception I meet here, or in Abyssinia. It is a 64 gun ship; its name, the Lion; its captain, Thomas Price. I mention these particulars, that you may inquire into the truth. Upon the first news of a disaster he would come here, and destroy Ar-keeko, and this island, in a day. But this is not my business with you at present.

It is a very proper custom, established all over the east, that strangers should make an acknowledgement for the protection they receive, and trouble they are to occasion. I have a present for the Naybe, whose temper and disposition I know perfectly,—(Ullah Acbar! repeats Achmet).—I have likewise a present for you, and for the Kaya of the Janizaries; all these I shall deliver the first day I see the Naybe; but I was taught, in a particular manner, to repose upon you as my friend, and a small, but separate acknowledgement, is due to you in that character. I was told, that your agent at Jidda had been inquiring everywhere among the India ships, and at the broker of that nation, for a pair of English pistols, for which he offered a very high price; though, in all probability, those you would get would have been but ordinary, and much used; now I have brought you this separate present, a pair of excellent workmanship;



here they are : my doubt, which gave rise to this long private conversation, was, whether you would take them home yourself ; or, if you have a confidential servant that you can trust, let him take them, so that it be not known ; for if the Naybe"——

"I UNDERSTAND every thing that you say, and every thing that you would say. Though I do not know men's hearts that I never saw, as you do, I know pretty well the hearts of those with whom I live. Let the pistols remain with you, and shew them to nobody till I send you a man to whom you may say any thing, and he shall go between you and me ; for there is in this place a number of devils, not men ; but, *Ullab Kerim*, God is great. The person that brings you dry dates in an Indian handkerchief, and an earthen bottle to drink your water out of, give him the pistols. You may send by him to me any thing you choose. In the mean time, sleep sound, and fear no evil ; but never be persuaded to trust yourself to the Cafers of Habesh at Ma-fuah."

ON the 20th of September a female slave came and brought with her the proper credentials, an Indian handkerchief full of dry dates, and a pot or bottle of unvarnished potter's earth, which keeps the water very cool. I had some doubt upon this change of sex ; but the slave, who was an Abyssinian girl, quickly undeceived me, delivered the dates, and took away the pistols destined for Achmet, who had himself gone to his uncle, the Naybe, at Arkeeko.

ON the 21st, in the morning, the Naybe came from Arkeeko. The usual way is by sea ; it is about two leagues  
 . . . . . straight

straight across the bay, but somewhat more by land. The passage from the main is on the north side of the island, which is not above a quarter of a mile broad; there is a large cistern for rain-water on the land-side, where you embark across. He was poorly attended by three or four servants, miserably mounted, and about forty naked savages on foot, armed with short lances and crooked knives.

THE drum beat before him all the way from Arkeeko to Masuah. Upon entering the boat, the drum on the land-side ceased, and those, in what is called the Castle of Masuah, began. The castle is a small clay hut, and in it one swivel-gun, which is not mounted, but lies upon the ground, and is fired always with great trepidation and some danger. The drums are earthen jars, such as they send butter in to Arabia; the mouths of which are covered with a skin, so that a stranger, on seeing two or three of these together, would run a great risk of believing them to be jars of butter, or pickles, carefully covered with oiled parchment.

ALL the procession was in the same stile. The Naybe was dressed in an old shabby Turkish habit, much too short for him, and seemed to have been made about the time of Sultan Selim. He wore also upon his head a Turkish cowke, or high-cap, which scarcely admitted any part of his head. In this dress, which on him had a truly ridiculous appearance, he received the castan, or investiture, of the island of Masuah; and, being thereby representative of the grand signior, consented that day to be called Omar Aga, in honour of the commission.

Two standards of white silk, striped with red, were carried before him to the mosque, from whence he went to his own house to receive the compliments of his friends. In the afternoon of that day I went to pay my respects to him, and found him sitting on a large wooden elbow-chair, at the head of two files of naked savages, who made an avenue from his chair to the door. He had nothing upon him but a coarse cotton shirt, so dirty that, it seemed, all pains to clean it again would be thrown away, and so short that it scarcely reached his knees. He was very tall and lean, his colour black, had a large mouth and nose; in place of a beard, a very scanty tuft of grey hairs upon the point of his chin; large, dull, and heavy eyes; a kind of malicious, contemptuous, smile on his countenance; he was altogether of a most stupid and brutal appearance. His character perfectly corresponded with his figure, for he was a man of mean abilities, cruel to excess, avaricious, and a great drunkard.

I PRESENTED my firman.—The greatest basha in the Turkish empire would have risen upon seeing it, kissed it, and carried it to his forehead; and I really expected that Omar Aga, for the day he bore that title, and received the caftan, would have shewn this piece of respect to his master. But he did not even receive it into his hand, and pushed it back to me again, saying, “Do you read it all to me word for word.”—“I told him it was Turkish; that I had never learned to read a word of that language.”—“Nor I either,” says he; “and I believe I never shall.” I then gave him Metical Aga’s letter, the Sherriffe’s, Ali Bey’s, and the Janizaries letters. He took them all together in both his hands, and laid them unopened beside him, saying, “You should have

have brought a moullah along with you. Do you think I shall read all these letters? Why, it would take me a month." And he glared upon me, with his mouth open, so like an idiot, that it was with the utmost difficulty I kept my gravity, only answering, "Just as you please; you know best."

He affected at first not to understand Arabic; spoke by an interpreter in the language of Masuah, which is a dialect of Tigré; but seeing I understood him in this, he spoke Arabic, and spoke it well.

A SILENCE followed this short conversation, and I took the opportunity to give him his present, with which he did not seem displeased, but rather that it was below him to tell me so; for, without saying a word about it, he asked me, where the Abuna of Habesh was? and why he tarried so long? I said, The wars in Upper Egypt had made the roads dangerous; and, it was easy to see, Omar longed much to settle accounts with him.

I took my leave of the Naybe, very little pleased with my reception, and the small account he seemed to make of my letters, or of myself; but heartily satisfied with having sent my dispatches to Janni, now far out of his power.

THE inhabitants of Masuah were dying of the small-pox, so that there was fear the living would not be sufficient to bury the dead. The whole island was filled with shrieks and lamentation: both night and day. They at last began to throw the bodies into the sea, which deprived us of our great support, fish, of which we had ate some kinds that  
were

were excellent. I had suppressed my character of physician, fearing I should be detained by reason of the multitude of sick.

ON the 15th of October the Naybe came to Masuah, and dispatched the vessel that brought me over; and, as if he had only waited till this evidence was out of the way, he, that very night, sent me word that I was to prepare him a handsome present. He gave in a long list of particulars to a great amount, which he desired might be divided into three parcels, and presented three several days. One was to be given him as Naybe of Arkeeko; one as Omar Aga, representative of the grand signior; and one for having passed our baggage *gratis* and unvisited, especially the large quadrant. For my part, I heartily wished he had seen the whole, as he would not have set great value on the brás and iron.

As Achmet's assurance of protection had given me courage, I answered him, That, having a firman of the grand signior, and letters from Metical Aga, it was mere generosity in me to give him any present at all, either as Naybe or Omar Aga, and I was not a merchant that bought and sold, nor had merchandise on board, therefore had no customs to pay. Upon this he sent for me to his house, where I found him in a violent fury, and many useless words passed on both sides. At last he peremptorily told me, That unless I had 300 ounces of gold ready to pay him on Monday, upon his landing from Arkeeko, he would confine me in a dungeon, without light, air, or meat, till the bones came through my skin for want.

AN uncle of his, then present, greatly aggravated this affair. He pretended that the Naybe might do what he pleased with his presents; but that he could not in any shape give away the present due to the janizaries, which was 40 ounces of gold, or 400 dollars; and this was all they contented themselves to take, on account of the letter I brought from the port of janizaries at Cairo; and in this they only taxed me the sum paid by the Abuna for his passage through Masuah. I answered firmly,—“ Since you have broken your faith with the grand signior, the government of Cairo, the basha at Jidda, and Metical Aga, you will no doubt do as you please with me; but you may expect to see the English man of war, the Lion, before Arkeeko, some morning by day-break.”—“ I should be glad,” said the Naybe, “ to see that man at Arkeeko or Masuah that would carry as much writing from you to Jidda as would lie upon my thumb nail; I would strip his shirt off first, and then his skin, and hang him before your door to teach you more wisdom.”—“ But my wisdom has taught me to prevent all this. My letter is already gone to Jidda; and if, in twenty days from this, another letter from me does not follow it, you will see what will arrive. In the mean time, I here announce it to you, that I have letters from Metical Aga and the Sherriffe of Mecca, to Michael Suhul governor of Tigrè, and the king of Abyssinia. I, therefore, would wish that you would leave off these unmanly altercations, which serve no sort of purpose, and let me continue my journey.” The Naybe said in a low voice to himself, “ What, Michael too! then go your journey, and think of the ill that’s before you.” I turned my back without any answer or salutation, and was scarce arrived at home when a message came from the Naybe, desiring I would send him two bottles of aquavite.

I gave

I gave the servant two bottles of cinnamon-water, which he refused till I had first tasted them ; but they were not agreeable to the Naybe, so they were returned.

ALL this time I very much wondered what was become of Achmet, who, with Mahomet Gibberti, remained at Arkeeko: at last I heard from the Naybe's servant that he was in bed, ill of a fever. Mahomet Gibberti had kept his promise to me ; and, saying nothing of my skill in physic, or having medicines with me, I sent, however, to the Naybe to desire leave to go to Arkeeko. He answered me surlily, I might go if I could find a boat ; and, indeed, he had taken his measures so well that not a boat would stir for money or persuasion.

ON the 29th of October the Naybe came again from Arkeeko to Masuah, and, I was told, in very ill-humour with me. I soon received a message to attend him, and found him in a large waste room like a barn, with about sixty people with him. This was his divan, or grand council, with all his janizaries and officers of state, all naked, assembled in parliament. There was a comet that had appeared a few days after our arrival at Masuah, which had been many days visible in Arabia Felix, being then in its perihelion ; and, after passing its conjunction with the sun, it now appeared at Masuah early in the evening, receding to its aphelion. I had been observed watching it with great attention ; and the large tubes of the telescopes had given offence to ignorant people.

THE first question the Naybe asked me was, What that comet meant, and why it appeared ? And before I could an-

swer him, he again said, "The first time it was visible it brought the small-pox, which has killed above 1000 people in Masuah and Arkeeko. It is known you conversed with it every night at Loheia; it has now followed you again to finish the few that remain, and then you are to carry it into Abyssinia. What have you to do with the comet?"

WITHOUT giving me leave to speak, his brother Emir Achmet then said, That he was informed I was an engineer going to Michael, governor of Tigré, to teach the Abyssinians to make cannon and gunpowder; that the first attack was to be against Masuah. Five or six others spoke much in the same strain; and the Naybe concluded by saying, That he would send me in chains to Constantinople, unless I went to Hamazen, with his brother Emir Achmet, to the hot-wells there, and that this was the resolution of all the janizaries; for I had concealed my being a physician.

I HAD not yet opened my mouth. I then asked, If all these were janizaries; and where was their commanding officer? A well-looking, elderly man answered, "I am Sardar of the janizaries."—"If you are Sardar, then," said I, "this firman orders you to protect me. The Naybe is a man of this country, no member of the Ottoman empire." Upon my first producing my firman to him, he threw it aside like waste-paper. The greatest Vizir in the Turkish dominions would have received it standing, bowed his head to the ground, then kissed it, and put it upon his forehead. A general murmur of approbation followed, and I continued,—“Now I must tell you my resolution is, never to go to Hamazen, or elsewhere, with Emir Achmet. Both he and the Naybe have shewed themselves my enemies; and, I be-

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lieve,



lieve, that to fend me to Hamazen is to rob and murder me out of fight.”—“ Dog of a Christian !” says Emir Achmet, putting his hand to his knife, “ if the Naybe was to murder you, could he not do it here now this minute ?” —“ No,” says the man, who had called himself Sardar, “ he could not ; I would not suffer any such thing. Achmet is the stranger’s friend, and recommended me to-day to see no injury done him; he is ill, or would have been here himself.”

“ ACHMET,” said I, “ is my friend, and fears God ; and were I not hindered by the Naybe from seeing him, his sickness before this would have been removed. I will go to Achmet at Arkeeko, but not to Hamazen, nor ever again to the Naybe here in Mafuah. Whatever happens to me must befall me in my own house. Consider what a figure a few naked men will make the day that my countrymen ask the reason of this either here or in Arabia.” I then turned my back, and went out without ceremony. “ A brave man !” I heard a voice say behind me, “ *Wallah Englese!* True English, by G—d !” I went away exceedingly disturbed, as it was plain my affairs were coming to a crisis for good or for evil. I observed, or thought I observed, all the people shun me. I was, indeed, upon my guard, and did not wish them to come near me ; but, turning down into my own gateway, a man passed close by me, saying distinctly in my ear, though in a low voice, first in Tigré and then in Arabic, “ *Fear nothing*, or, Be not afraid.” This hint, short as it was, gave me no small courage.

I HAD scarcely dined, when a servant came with a letter from Achmet at Arkeeko, telling me how ill he had been, and how sorry he was that I refused to come to see him, as

Mahomet

Mahomet Gibberti had told him I could help him. He desired me also to keep the bearer with me in my house, and give him charge of the gate till he could come to Masuah himself.

I soon saw the treachery of the Naybe. He had not, indeed, forbid me to go and see his nephew, but he had forbid any boat to carry me; and this I told the servant, appealing to the Sardar for what I said in the divan of my willingness to go to Arkeeko to Achmet, though I positively refused to go to Hamazen. I begged the servant to stop for a moment, and go to the Sardar who was in the castle, as I had been very essentially obliged to him for his interposition at a very critical time, when there was an intention to take away my life. I sent him a small present by Achmet's servant, who delivered the message faithfully, and had heard all that had passed in the divan. He brought me back a pipe from the Sardar in return for my present, with this message, That he had heard of my countrymen, though he had never seen them; that he loved brave men, and could not see them injured; but Achmet being my friend, I had no need of him. That night he departed for Arkeeko, desiring us to shut the door, and leaving us another man, with orders to admit nobody, and advising us to defend ourselves if any one offered to force entrance, be they who they would, for that nobody had business abroad in the night.

I now began to resume my confidence, seeing that Providence had still kept us under his protection; and it was not long when we had an opportunity to exercise this confidence. About 12 o'clock at night a man came to the door, and desired to be admitted; which request was refused

without any ceremony. Then came two or three more, in the name of Achmet, who were told by the servant that they would not be admitted. They then asked to speak with me, and grew very tumultuous, pressing with their backs against the door. When I came to them, a young man among them said he was son to Emir Achmet, and that his father and some friends were coming to drink a glass of aracky (so they call brandy) with me. I told him my resolution was not to admit either Emir Achmet, or any other person at night, and that I never drank aracky.

THEY attempted again to force open the door, which was strongly barricaded. But as there were cracks in it, I put the point of a sword through one of them, desiring them to be cautious of hurting themselves upon the iron spikes. Still they attempted to force open the door, when the servant told them, that Achmet, when he left him the charge of that door, had ordered us to fire upon them who offered to force an entrance at night. A voice asked him, Who the devil he was? The servant answered, in a very spirited manner, That he had greater reason to ask who they were, as he took them for thieves, about whose names he did not trouble himself. "However," says he, "mine is Abdelcader, (the son of somebody else whom I do not remember). Now you know who I am, and that I do not fear you; and you, Yagoube, if you do not fire upon them, your blood be upon your own head. The Sardar from the castle will soon be up with the rest." I ordered then a torch to be brought, that they might have a view of us through the cracks of the door; but Abdelcader's threat being fully sufficient, they retired, and we heard no more of them.

It was the 4th of November when the servant of Achmet returned in a boat from Arkeeko, and with him four janizaries. He was not yet well, and was very desirous to see me. He suspected either that he was poisoned or bewitched, and had tried many charms without good effect. We arrived at Arkeeko about eleven, passed the door of the Naybe without challenge, and found Achmet in his own house, ill of an intermitting fever, under the very worst of regimens.

HE was much apprehensive that he should die, or lose the use of his limbs as Emir Achmet had done: the same woman, a Shiho, and a witch, was, he said, the occasion of both. "If Achmet, your uncle, had lost the use of his tongue, said I, it would have saved him a great deal of improper discourse in the divan." His head ached violently, and he could only say, "Aye! aye! the old miscreant knew I was ill, or that would not have happened." I gave Achmet proper remedies to ease his pains and his stomach, and the next morning began with bark.

THIS medicine operates quickly here; nay, even the bark that remains, after the stronger spiritous tincture is drawn from it, seems to answer the purpose very little worse than did the first. I staid here till the 6th in the morning, at which time he was free from the fever. I left him, however, some doses to prevent its return; and he told me, on the 7th, he would come to Masuah with boats and men to bring us with our baggage to Arkeeko, and free us from the bondage of Masuah.

UPON the 6th, in the morning, while at breakfast, I was told that three servants had arrived from Tigrè; one from Janni, a young man and slave, who spoke and wrote Greek perfectly; the other two servants were Ras Michael's, or rather the king's, both wearing the red short cloak lined and turned up with mazarine-blue, which is the badge of the king's servant, and is called *shalaka*. Ras Michael's letters to the Naybe were very short. He said the king Hatzè Hannes's health was bad, and wondered at hearing that the physician, sent to him by Metical Aga from Arabia, was not forwarded to him instantly at Gondar, as he had heard of his being arrived at Masuah some time before. He ordered the Naybe, moreover, to furnish me with necessaries, and dispatch me without loss of time; although all the letters were the contrivances of Janni, his particular letter to the Naybe was in a milder stile. He expressed the great necessity the king had for a physician, and how impatiently he had waited his arrival. He did not say that he had heard any such person was yet arrived at Masuah, only wished he might be forwarded without delay as soon as he came.

To us Janni sent a message by a servant, bidding us a hearty welcome, acknowledging the receipt of the patriarch's letter, and advising us, by all means, to come speedily to him, for the times were very unsettled, and might grow worse.

In the afternoon I embarked for Masuah. At the shore I received a message from the Naybe to come and speak to him; but I returned for answer, It was impossible, as I was obliged to go to Masuah to get medicines for his nephew, Achmet.

## CHAP. II.

*Directions to Travellers for preserving Health—Diseases of the Country—  
Music—Trade, &c. of Masuah—Conferences with the Naybe.*

**W**E arrived in the island at eight o'clock, to the great joy of our servants, who were afraid of some stratagem of the Naybe. We got every thing in order, without interruption, and completed our observations upon this inhospitable island, infamous for the quantity of Christian blood shed there upon treacherous pretences.

MASUAH, by a great variety of observations of the sun and stars, we found to be in lat.  $15^{\circ} 35' 5''$ , and, by an observation of the second satellite of Jupiter, on the 22d of September 1769, we found its longitude to be  $39^{\circ} 36' 30''$  east of the meridian of Greenwich: the variation of the needle was observed at mid-day, the 23d of September, to be  $12^{\circ} 48'$  W. From this it follows, that Loheia, being nearly opposite, (for it is in lat.  $15^{\circ} 40' 52''$ ) the breadth of the Red Sea between Masuah and Loheia is  $4^{\circ} 10' 22''$ . Supposing, then, a degree to be equal to 66 statute miles, this, in round numbers, will bring the  
breadth.

breadth to be 276 miles, equal to 92 leagues, or thereabouts.

AGAIN, as the generality of maps have placed the coast of Arabia where Loheia stands, in the  $44^{\circ}$ , and it is the part of the peninsula that runs farthest to the westward, all the west coast of Arabia Felix will fall to be brought farther east about  $3^{\circ} 46' 0''$ .

BEFORE packing up our barometer at Loheia, I filled a tube with clean mercury, perfectly purged of outward air; and, on the 30th of August, upon three several trials, the mean of the results of each trial was, at six in the morning,  $26^{\circ} 8' 8''$ ; two o'clock in the afternoon,  $26^{\circ} 4' 1''$ ; and, half past six in the evening,  $26^{\circ} 6' 2''$ , fair, clear weather, with very little wind at west.

AT Masuah, the 4th of October, I repeated the same experiment with the same mercury and tube; the means were as follow: At six in the morning  $25^{\circ} 8' 2''$ ; two o'clock in the afternoon,  $25^{\circ} 3' 2''$ ; and, at half past six in the evening,  $25^{\circ} 3' 7''$ , clear, with a moderate wind at west, so that the barometer fell one inch and one line at Masuah lower than it was at Loheia, though it often rose upon violent storms of wind and rain; and, even where there was no rain, it again fell instantly upon the storm ceasing, and never arrived to the height it stood last at on the coast of Arabia. The greatest height I ever observed Fahrenheit's thermometer in the shade, at Masuah, was on the 22d of October, at two in the afternoon,  $93^{\circ}$ , wind N. E. and by N. cloudy; the lowest was on the 23d, at four in the morning,  $82^{\circ}$ , wind west. It was, to sense, much hotter, than in any part of Arabia Felix; but

we found no such tickling or irritation on our legs as we had done at Loheia, probably because the soil was here less impregnated with salt.

WE observed here, for the first time, three remarkable circumstances shewing the increase of heat. I had carried with me several steel plates for making screws of different sizes. The heat had so swelled the pin, or *male* screw, that it was cut nearly one-third through by the edge of the female. The sealing-wax, of which we had procured a fresh parcel from the India ships, was fully more fluid, while lying in our boxes, than tar. The third was the colour of the spirit in the thermometer, which was quite discharged, and sticking in masses at unequal heights, while the liquor was clear like spring-water.

MASUAH is very unwholesome, as, indeed, is the whole coast of the Red Sea from Suez to Babelmandeb, but more especially between the tropics. Violent fevers, called there *nedad*, make the principal figure in this fatal list, and generally terminate the third day in death. If the patient survives till the fifth day, he very often recovers by drinking water only, and throwing a quantity of cold water upon him, even in his bed, where he is permitted to lie without attempting to make him dry, or change his bed, till another deluge adds to the first.

THERE is no remedy so sovereign here as the bark ; but it must be given in very different times and manners from those pursued in Europe. Were a physician to take time to prepare his patient for the bark, by first giving him purgatives, he would be dead of the fever before his preparation



was completed. Immediately when a nausea or aversion to eat, frequent fits of yawning, straitness about the eyes, and an unusual, but not painful sensation along the spine, comes on, no time is then to be lost; small doses of the bark must be frequently repeated, and perfect abstinence observed, unless from copious draughts of cold water.

I NEVER dared to venture, or seldom, upon the deluge of water, but am convinced it is frequently of great use. The second or third dose of the bark, if any quantity is swallowed, never fails to purge; and, if this evacuation is copious, the patient rarely dies, but, on the contrary, his recovery is generally rapid. Moderate purging, then, is for the most part to be adopted; and rice is a much better food than fruit.

I KNOW that all this is heterodox in Europe, and contrary to the practice, because it is contrary to system. For my own part, I am content to write faithfully what I carefully observed, leaving every body afterwards to follow their own way at their peril.

BARK, I have been told by Spaniards who have been in South America, purges always when taken in their fevers. A different climate, different regimen, and different habit of body or exercise, may surely so far alter the operation of a drug as to make it have a different effect in Africa from what it has in Europe. Be that as it may, still I say bark is a purgative when it is successful in this fever; but bleeding, at no stage of this distemper, is of any service; and, indeed, if attempted the second day, the lancet is seldom followed by blood. Ipecacuanha both fatigues the patient and heightens the fever, and so conducts the patient more speedily to his end.

end. Black spots are frequently found on the breast and belly of the dead person. The belly swells, and the stench becomes insufferable in three hours after death, if the person dies in the day, or if the weather is warm.

THE next common disease in the low country of Arabia, the intermediate island of Masuah, and all Abyssinia, (for the diseases are exactly similar in all this tract) is the Tertian fever, which is in nothing different from our Tertian, and is successfully treated here in the same manner as in Europe. As no species of this disease (at least that I have seen) menaces the patient with death, especially in the beginning of the disorder, some time may be allowed for preparation to those who doubt the effect of the bark in the country. But still I apprehend the safest way is to give small doses from the beginning, on the first intermission, or even remission, though this should be somewhat obscure and uncertain. To speak plainly; when the stomach nauseates, the head akes, yawning becomes frequent, and not an excessive pain in the nape of the neck, when a shivering which goes quickly off, a coldness down the spine, a more than ordinary cowardliness and inactivity prevails, (the heat of the climate gives one always enough of these last sensations); I say, when any number of these symptoms unite, have recourse to the powder of bark infused in water; shut your mouth against every sort of food; and, at the crisis, your disease will immediately decide its name among the class of fevers.

• ALL fevers end in intermittents; and if these intermittents continue long, and the first evacuations by the bark have not been copious and constant, these fevers generally end

in dysenteries, which are always tedious and very frequently prove mortal. Bark in small quantities, ipecacuanha, too, in very small quantities so as not to vomit, water, and fruit not over ripe, have been found the most successful remedies.

As for the other species of dysentery, which begins with a constant diarrhœa, when the guts at last are excoriated, and the mucus voided by the stools, this disease is rarely cured if it begins with the rainy season. But if, on the contrary, it happen either in the sunny six months, or the end of the rainy ones immediately next to them, small doses of ipecacuanha either carry it off, or it changes into an intermitting fever, which yields afterwards to the bark. And it always has seemed to me that there is a great affinity between the fevers and dysenteries in these countries, the one ending in the other almost perpetually.

THE next disease, which we may say is endemial in the countries before mentioned, is called *banzeer*, the *bogs* or the *fwine*, and is a swelling of the glands of the throat, and under the arms. This the ignorant inhabitants endeavour to bring to a suppuration, but in vain; they then open them in several places; a sore and running follows, and a disease very much resembling what is called in Europe the Evil.

THE next (though not a dangerous complaint) has a very terrible appearance. Small tubercles or swellings appear all over the body, but thickest in the thighs, arms, and legs. These swellings go and come for weeks together without pain; though the legs often swell to a monstrous size as in the dropsy. Sometimes the patients have ulcers in their  
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noscs and mouths, not unlike those which are one of the malignant consequences of the venereal disease. The small swellings or eruptions, when squeezed, very often yield blood; in other respects the patient is generally in good health, saving the pain the ulcers give him, and the still greater uneasiness of mind which he suffers from the spoiling of the smoothness of his skin; for all the nations in Africa within the tropics are wonderfully affected at the smallest eruption or roughness of the skin. A black of Senaar will hide himself in the house where dark, and is not to be seen by his friends, if he should have two or three pimples on any part of his body. Nor is there any remedy, however violent, that they will not fly to for immediate relief. Scars and wounds are no blemishes; and I have seen them, for three or four pimples on their bracelet arm, suffer the application of a red-hot iron with great resolution and constancy.

THESE two last diseases yielded, the first slowly, and sometimes imperfectly, to mercurials; and sublimate has by no means in these climates the quick and decisive effects it has in Europe. The second is completely and speedily cured by antimonials.

THE next complaint I shall mention, as common in these countries, is called Farenteit, a corruption of an Arabic word, which signifies the worm of Pharaoh; all bad things being by the Arabs attributed to these poor kings, who seem to be looked upon by posterity as the evil genii of the country which they once governed.

THIS extraordinary animal only afflicts those who are in constant habit of drinking stagnant water, whether that water is drawn out from wells, as in the kingdom of Sennaar, or found by digging in the sand where it is making its way to its proper level the sea, after falling down the side of the mountains after the tropical rains. This plague appears indiscriminately in every part of the body, but ofteneft in the legs and arms. I never saw it in the face or head ; but, far from affecting the fleshy parts of the body, it generally comes out where the bone has least flesh upon it.

UPON looking at this worm, on its first appearance, a small black head is extremely visible, with a hooked beak of a whitish colour. Its body is seemingly of a white silky texture, very like a small tendon bared and perfectly cleaned. After its appearance the natives of these countries, who are used to it, seize it gently by the head, and wrap it round a thin piece of silk or small bird's feather. Every day, or several times a-day, they try to wind it up upon the quill as far as it comes readily ; and, upon the smallest resistance, they give over for fear of breaking it. I have seen five feet, or something more of this extraordinary animal, winded out with invincible patience in the course of three weeks. No inflammation then remained, and scarcely any redness round the edges of the aperture, only a small quantity of lymph appeared in the hole or puncture, which scarcely issued out upon pressing. In three days it was commonly well, and left no scar or dimple implying loss of substance.

I MYSELF experienced this complaint. I was reading upon a sofa at Cairo, a few days after my return from Upper Egypt, when I felt in the fore part of my leg, upon the bone

bone, about seven inches below the center of my knee-pan, an itching resembling what follows the bite of a muscheto. Upon scratching, a small tumour appeared very like a muscheto bite. The itching returned in about an hour afterwards; and, being more intent upon my reading than my leg, I scratched it till the blood came. I soon after observed something like a black spot, which had already risen considerably above the surface of the skin. All medicine proved useless; and the disease not being known at Cairo, there was nothing for it but to have recourse to the only received manner of treating it in this country. About three inches of the worm was winded out upon a piece of raw silk in the first week, without pain or fever: but it was broken afterwards through the carelessness and rashness of the surgeon when changing a poultice on board the ship in which I returned to France: a violent inflammation followed; the leg swelled so as to scarce leave appearance of knee or ankle; the skin, red and distended, seemed glazed like a mirror. The wound was now healed, and discharged nothing; and there was every appearance of mortification coming on. The great care and attention procured me in the lazaretto at Marseilles, by a nation always foremost in the acts of humanity to strangers, and the attention and skill of the surgeon, recovered me from this troublesome complaint.

FIFTY-TWO days had elapsed since it first begun; thirty-five of which were spent in the greatest agony. It suppurated at last; and, by enlarging the orifice, a good quantity of matter was discharged. I had made constant use of bark, both in fomentations and inwardly; but I did not recover the strength of my leg entirely till near a year after, by  
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using the baths of Poretta, the property of my friend Count Ranuzzi, in the mountains above Bologna, which I recommend, for their efficacy, to all those who have wounds, as I do to him to have better accommodation, greater abundance of, and less imposition in, the necessaries of life than when I was there, It is but a few hours journey over the mountains to Pistoia.

THE last I shall mention of these endemial diseases, and the most terrible of all others that can fall to the lot of man, is the Elephantiasis, which some have chosen to call the Leprosy, or *Lepra Arabum*; though in its appearance, and in all its circumstances and stages, it no more resembles the leprosy of Palestine, (which is, I apprehend, the only leprosy that we know) than it does the gout or the dropsy. I never saw the beginning of this disease. During the course of it, the face is often healthy to appearance; the eyes vivid and sparkling; those affected have sometimes a kind of dryness upon the skin of their backs, which, upon scratching, I have seen leave a mealiness, or whiteness; the only circumstance, to the best of my recollection, in which it resembled the leprosy, but it has no scabiness. The hair, too, is of its natural colour; not white, yellowish, or thin, as in the leprosy, but so far from it that, though the Abyssinians have very rarely hair upon their chin, I have seen people, apparently in the last stage of the elephantiasis, with a very good beard of its natural colour.

THE appetite is generally good during this disease, nor does any change of regimen affect the complaint. The pulse is only subject to the same variations as in those who have no declared nor predominant illness; they have a constant

stant thirst, as the lymph, which continually oozes from their wounds, probably demands to be replaced. It is averred by the Abyssinians that it is not infectious. I have seen the wives of those who were in a very inveterate stage of this illness, who had born them several children, who were yet perfectly free and sound from any contagion. Nay, I do not remember to have seen children visibly infected with this disease at all ; though, I must own, none of them had the appearance of health. It is said this disease, though surely born with the infant, does not become visible till the approach to manhood, and sometimes it is said to pass by a whole generation.

THE chief feat of this disease is from the bending of the knee downwards to the ankle ; the leg is swelled to a great degree, becoming one size from bottom to top, and gathered into circular wrinkles, like small hoops or plaits ; between every one of which there is an opening that separates it all round from the one above, and which is all raw flesh, or perfectly excoriated. From between these circular divisions a great quantity of lymph constantly oozes. The swelling of the leg reaches over the foot, so as to leave about an inch or little more of it seen. It should seem that the black colour of the skin, the thickness of the leg, and its shapeless form, and the rough tubercles, or excrescences, very like those seen upon the elephant, give the name to this disease, and form a striking resemblance between the distempered legs of this unfortunate individual of the human species, and those of the noble quadruped the elephant, when in full vigour.



AN infirmity, to which the Abyſſinians are ſubject, of much worſe conſequence to the community than the elephantiaſis, I mean lying, makes it impoſſible to form, from their relations, any accurate account of ſymptoms that might lead the learned to diſcover the cauſes of this extraordinary diſtemper, and thence ſuggeſt ſome rational method to cure, or diminifh it.

It was not from the ignorance of language, nor from want of opportunity, and leſs from want of pains, that I am not able to give a more diſtinct account of this dreadful diſorder. I kept one of thoſe infected in a houſe adjoining to mine, in my way to the palace, for near two years; and, during that time, I tried every ſort of regimen that I could deviſe. My friend, Dr Ruſſel, phyſician at Aleppo, (now in the Eaſt Indies), to whoſe care and ſkill I was indebted for my life in a dangerous fever which I had in Syria, and whoſe friendſhip I muſt always conſider as one of the greateſt acquiſitions I ever made in travelling, deſired me, among other medical inquiries, to try the effect of the cicuta upon this diſeaſe; and a conſiderable quantity, made according to the direction of Dr Storke, phyſician in Vienna, was ſent me from Paris, with inſtructions how to uſe it.

HAVING firſt explained the whole matter, both to the king, Ras Michael, and Azage Tecla Haimanout, chief juſtice of the king's bench in Abyſſinia, and told them of the conſequences of giving too great a doſe, I obtained their joint permiſſions to go on without fear, and do what I thought requiſite. It is my opinion, ſays the Azage, that no harm that may accidentally befall one miſerable individual, now already cut off from ſociety, ſhould hinder the trial (the  
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only one we ever shall have an opportunity of making) of a medicine which may save multitudes hereafter from a disease so much worse than death.

It was soon seen, by the constant administration of many ordinary doses, that nothing was to be expected from violent or dangerous ones; as not the smallest degree of amendment ever appeared, either outwardly or inwardly, to the sensation of the patient. Mercury had no better effect. Tar-water also was tried; and if there was any thing that produced any seeming advantage, it was whey made of cow's milk, of which he was excessively fond, and which the king ordered him to be furnished with at my desire, in any quantity he pleased, during the experiment.

The troubles of the times prevented further attention. Dr Storke's cicuta, in several instances, made a perfect cure of the hanzers improperly opened, though, in several other cases, without any apparent cause, it totally miscarried. I scarce ever observed mercury succeed in any complaint.

It is not for me to attempt to explain what are the causes of these distempers. Those whose studies lead them to such investigations will do well to attach themselves, for first principles, to the difference of climate, and the abuses that obtain under them; after this, to particular circumstances in the necessities of life, to which nature has subjected the people of these countries. Under the first, we may rank a season of six months rains, succeeded, without interval, by a cloudless sky and vertical sun; and cold nights which as immediately follow these scorching

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days.

days. The earth, notwithstanding the heat of these days, is yet perpetually cold, so as to feel disagreeably to the soles of the feet; partly owing to the six months rains, when no sun appears, and partly to the perpetual equality of nights and days; the thinness of the cloathing in the better sort, (a muslin shirt) while the others are naked, and sleep in this manner exposed, without covering in the cold nights, after the violent perspiration during the sultry day. These may be reckoned imprudences, while the constant use of stagnant putrid water for four months of the year, and the quantity of salt with which the soil of those countries is impregnated, may be circumstances less conducive to health; to which, however, they have been for ever subject by nature.

It will be very reasonably expected, that, after this unfavourable account of the climate, and the uncertainty of remedies for these frequent and terrible diseases, I should say something of the regimen proper to be observed there, in order to prevent what it seems so doubtful whether we can ever cure.

My first general advice to a traveller is this, to remember well what was the state of his constitution before he visited these countries, and what his complaints were, if he had any; for fear very frequently seizes us upon the first sight of the many and sudden deaths we see upon our first arrival, and our spirits are so lowered by perpetual perspiration, and our nerves so relaxed, that we are apt to mistake the ordinary symptoms of a disease, familiar to us in our own country, for the approach of one of these terrible distempers that are to hurry us in a few hours into eternity. This has a bad effect in the very slightest disorders; so

so that it hath become proverbial—If you think you shall die, you shall die.

If a traveller finds, that he is as well after having been some time in this country as he was before entering it, his best way is to make no innovation in his regimen, further than in abating something in the quantity. But if he is of a tender constitution, he cannot act more wisely than to follow implicitly the regimen of sober, healthy people of the country, without arguing upon European notions, or substituting what we consider as succedaneums to what we see used on the spot. All spirits are to be avoided; even bark is better in water than in wine. The stomach, being relaxed by profuse perspiration, needs something to strengthen, but not inflame, and enable it to perform digestion. For this reason (instinct we should call it, if speaking of beasts) the natives of all eastern countries season every species of food, even the simplest, and mildest, rice, so much with spices, especially pepper, as absolutely to blister a European palate.

THESE powerful antiseptics Providence has planted in these countries for this use; and the natives have, from the earliest times, had recourse to them in proportion to the quantity that they can procure. And hence, in these dangerous climates, the natives are as healthy as we are in our northern ones. Travellers in Arabia are disgusted at this seemingly inflammatory food; and nothing is more common than to hear them say that they are afraid these quantities of spices will give them a fever. But did they ever feel themselves heated by ever so great a quantity of black pepper? Spirits they think, substituted to this, answer the same purpose. But does not the heat of your skin, the violent

violent pain in your head, while the spirits are filtering through the vessels of your brains, shew the difference? and when did any ever feel a like sensation from black pepper, or any pepper ate to excess in every meal?

I LAY down, then, as a positive rule of health, that the warmest dishes the natives delight in, are the most wholesome strangers can use in the putrid climates of the Lower Arabia, Abyssinia, Sennaar, and Egypt itself; and that spirits, and all fermented liquors, should be regarded as poisons, and, for fear of temptation, not so much as be carried along with you, unless as a menstruum for outward applications.

SPRING, or running water, if you can find it, is to be your only drink. You cannot be too nice in procuring this article. But as, on both coasts of the Red Sea you scarcely find any but stagnant water, the way I practised was always this, when I was at any place that allowed me time and opportunity—I took a quantity of fine sand, washed it from the salt quality with which it was impregnated, and spread it upon a sheet to dry; I then filled an oil-jar with water, and poured into it as much from a boiling kettle as would serve to kill all the animalcula and eggs that were in it. I then sifted my dried sand, as slowly as possible, upon the surface of the water in the jar, till the sand stood half a foot in the bottom of it; after letting it settle a night, we drew it off by a hole in the jar with a spigot in it, about an inch above the sand; then threw the remaining sand out upon the cloth, and dried and washed it again.

THIS process is sooner performed than described. The water is as limpid as the purest spring, and little inferior

ferior to the finest Spa. Drink largely of this without fear, according as your appetite requires. By violent perspiration the aqueous part of your blood is thrown off; and it is not spiritous liquor can restore this, whatever momentary strength it may give you from another cause. When hot, and almost fainting with weakness from continual perspiration, I have gone into a warm bath, and been immediately restored to strength, as upon first rising in the morning. Some perhaps will object, that this heat should have weakened and overpowered you; but the fact is otherwise; and the reason is, the quantity of water, taken up by your absorbing vessels, restored to your blood that finer fluid which was thrown off, and then the uneasiness occasioned by that want ceased, for it was the want of that we called uneasiness.

IN Nubia never scruple to throw yourself into the coldest river or spring you can find, in whatever degree of heat you are. The reason of the difference in Europe is, that when by violence you have raised yourself to an extraordinary degree of heat, the cold water in which you plunge yourself checks your perspiration, and shuts your pores suddenly. The medium is itself too cold, and you do not use force sufficient to bring back the perspiration, which nought but action occasioned; whereas, in these warm countries, your perspiration is natural and constant, though no action be used, only from the temperature of the medium; therefore, though your pores are shut, the moment you plunge yourself in the cold water, the simple condition of the outward air again covers you with pearls of sweat the moment you emerge; and you begin the expence of the aqueous part of your blood afresh from the new stock that you have laid in by your immersion.

FOR this reason, if you are well, deluge yourself from head to foot, even in the house, where water is plenty, by directing a servant to throw buckets upon you at least once a-day when you are hottest; not from any imagination that the water braces you, as it is called, for your bracing will last you only a very few minutes; but these copious inundations will carry watery particles into your blood, though not equal to bathing in running streams, where the total immersion, the motion of the water, and the action of the limbs, all conspire to the benefit you are in quest of. As to cold water bracing in these climates, I am persuaded it is an idea not founded in truth. By observation it has appeared often to me, that, when heated by violent exercise, I have been much more relieved, and my strength more completely restored by the use of a tepid bath, than by an equal time passed in a cold one.

Do not fatigue yourself if possible. Exercise is not either so necessary or salutary here as in Europe. Use fruits sparingly, especially if too ripe. The mufa, or banana, in Arabia Felix, are always rotten-ripe when they are brought to you. Avoid all sort of fruit exposed for sale in the markets, as it has probably been gathered in the sun, and carried miles in it, and all its juices are in a state of fermentation. Lay it first upon a table covered with a coarse cloth, and throw frequently a quantity of water upon it; and, if you have an opportunity, gather it in the dew of the morning before dawn of day, for that is far better.

Rice and pillaw are the best food; fowls are very bad, eggs are worse; greens are not wholesome. In Arabia the mutton is good, and, when roasted, may be eaten warm with safety;

safety; perhaps better if cold. All soups or broths are to be avoided; all game is bad.

I HAVE known many very scrupulous about eating suppers, but, I am persuaded, without reason. The great perspiration which relaxes the stomach so much through the day has now ceased, and the breathing of cooler air has given to its operations a much stronger tone. I always made it my most liberal meal, if I ate meat at all. While at Jidda, my supper was a piece of cold, roasted mutton, and a large glass of water, with my good friend Captain Thornhill, during the dog-days.

AFTER this, the excessive heat of the day being past, covering our heads from the night-air, always blowing at that time from the east and charged with watery particles from the Indian Ocean, we had a luxurious walk of two or three hours, as free from the heat as from the noise and impertinence of the day, upon a terraced roof, under a cloudless sky, where the smallest star is visible. These evening walks have been looked upon as one of the principal pleasures of the east, even though not accompanied with the luxuries of astronomy and meditation. They have been adhered to from early times to the present, and we may therefore be assured they were always wholesome; they have often been misapplied and mispent in love.

It is a custom that, from the first ages, has prevailed in the east, to shriek and lament upon the death of a friend or relation, and cut their faces upon the temple with their nails, about the breadth of a sixpence, one of which is left long for that purpose. It was always practised by the Jews,



and thence adopted by the Abyssinians, though expressly forbidden both by the law and by the prophets\*. At Masuah, it seems to be particular to dance upon that occasion. The women, friends, and visitors place themselves in a ring; then dance slowly, figuring in and out as in a country-dance. This dance is all to the voice, no instrument being used upon the occasion; only the drum (the butter-jar before mentioned) is beat adroitly enough, and seems at once necessary to keep the dance and song in order. In Abyssinia, too, this is pursued in a manner more ridiculous. Upon the death of an ozoro, or any nobleman, the twelve judges, (who are generally between 60 and 70 years of age) sing the song, and dance the figure-dance, in a manner so truly ridiculous, that grief must have taken fast hold of every spectator who does not laugh upon the occasion. There needs no other proof the deceased was a friend.

MAHOMET GIBBERTI married at Arkeeko. For fifteen days afterward, the husband there is invisible to everybody but the female friends of his wife, who in that sultry country do every thing they can, by hot and spiced drinks, to throw the man, stewed in a close room, into a fever. I do believe that Mahomet Gibberti, in the course of these fifteen days, was at least two stone lighter. It puts me much in mind of some of our countrymen sweating themselves for a horse-race with a load of flannel on. I conceive that Mahomet Gibberti, had it not been for the spice, would have made a bad figure in the match he was engaged in. One of these nights of his being sequestered, when, had I not providentially

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\* Levit. chap. xix, ver. 28. Jerem. chap. xvi, ver. 6.

tially engaged Achmet, his uncle the Naybe would have cut our throats. I heard two girls, professors hired for such occasions, sing alternately verse for verse in reply to each other, in the most agreeable and melodious manner I ever heard in my life. This gave me great hopes that, in Abyssinia, I should find music in a state of perfection little expected in Europe. Upon inquiry into particulars I was miserably disappointed, by being told these musicians were all strangers from Azab, the myrrh country, where all the people were natural musicians, and sung in a better stile than that I had heard; but that nothing of this kind was known in Abyssinia, a mountainous, barbarous country, without instrument, and without song; and that it was the same here in Atbara; a miserable truth, which I afterwards completely verified. These singers were Cushites, not Shepherds.

I, HOWEVER, made myself master of two or three of these alternate songs upon the guitar, the wretched instrument of that country; and was surprised to find the words in a language equally strange to Masuah and Abyssinia. I had frequent interviews with these musicians in the evening; they were perfectly black and woolly-headed. Being slaves, they spoke both Arabic and Tigrè, but could sing in neither; and, from every possible inquiry, I found every thing, allied to counterpoint, was unknown among them. I have sometimes endeavoured to recover fragments of these songs, which I once perfectly knew from memory only, but unfortunately I committed none of them to writing. Sorrow, and various misfortunes, that every day marked my stay in the barbarous country to which I was then going, and the necessary part I, much against my will, was for self-preservation

vation forced to take in the ruder occupations of those times, have, to my very great regret, obliterated long ago the whole from my memory.

It is a general custom in Masuah for people to burn myrrh and incense in their houses before they open the doors in the morning; and when they go out at night, or early in the day, they have always a small piece of rag highly fumigated with these two perfumes, which they stuff into each nostril to keep them from the unwholesome air.

THE houses in Masuah are, in general, built of poles and bent grass, as in the towns of Arabia; but, besides these, there are about twenty of stone, six or eight of which are two storeys each; though the second seldom consists of more than one room, and that one generally not a large one. The stones are drawn out of the sea as at Dahalac; and in these we see the beds of that curious mussel, or shell-fish, found to be contained in the solid rock at Mahon, called *Dattoli da mare*, or sea-dates, the fish of which I never saw in the Red Sea; though there is no doubt but they are to be found in the rocky islands about Masuah, if they break the rocks for them.

ALTHOUGH Masuah is situated in the very entrance of Abyssinia, a very plentiful country, yet all the necessaries of life are scarce and dear. Their quality, too, is very indifferent. This is owing to the difficulty, expence, and danger of carrying the several articles through the desert flat country, called Samhar, which lies between Arkeeko and the mountains of Abyssinia; as well as to the extortions exercised

exercised by the Naybe, who takes, under the name of customs, whatever part he pleases of the goods and provisions brought to that island; by which means the profit of the seller is so small, as not to be worth the pains and risk of bringing it: 20 rotol of butter cost a pataka and a half,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  harf; or, in one term,  $45\frac{1}{2}$  harf. A goat is half of a pataka; a sheep, two-thirds of a pataka; the ardep of wheat, 4 patakas; Dora, from Arabia, 2 patakas.

————— *Venit, vilissima rerum,*

*Hic aqua.*

Horat. lib. 1. Sat. 6. v. 88.

WATER is sold for three diwanis, or paras, the 7 gallons. The same sort of money is in use at Masuah, and the opposite coast of Arabia; and it is indeed owing to the commercial-intercourse with that coast that any coin is current in this or the western side. It is all valued by the Venetian sequin. But glass beads, called Contaria, of all kinds and colours, perfect and broken, pass for small money, and are called, in their language, Borjooke.

*TABLE of the relative VALUE of MONEY.*

Venetian Sequin,	—	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ Pataka.
Pataka or Imperial Dollar,	28	Harf.
1 Harf,	—	4 Diwani.
10 Kibeer,	—	1 Diwani,
1 Kibeer,	—	3 Borjooke, or Grains.

THE Harf is likewise called Dahab, a word very equivocal, as it means, in Arabic, gold, and frequently a sequin. The Harf is 120 grains of beads.

THE zermabub, or sequin of Constantinople, is not current here. Those that have them, can only dispose of them to the women, who hang them about their temples, to their necklaces, and round the necks of their children. The fraction of the pataka is the half and quarter, which pass here likewise.

THERE is a considerable deal of trade carried on at Masuah, notwithstanding these inconveniencies, narrow and confined as the island is, and violent and unjust as is the government. But it is all done in a slovenly manner, and for articles where a small capital is invested. Property here is too precarious to risk a venture in valuable commodities, where the hand of power enters into every transaction.

THE goods imported from the Arabian side are blue cotton, Surat cloths, and cochineal ditto, called Kermis, fine cloth from different markets in India; coarse white cotton cloths from Yemen; cotton unspun from ditto in bales; Venetian beads, chrysal, drinking, and looking-glasses; and cohob, or crude antimony. These three last articles come in great quantities from Cairo, first in the coffee ships to Jidda, and then in small barks over to this port. Old copper too is an article on which much is gained, and great quantity is imported.

THE Galla, and all the various tribes to the westward of Gondar, wear bracelets of this copper; and they say at times, that, near the country of Gongas and Guba, it has been found, weight for weight, with gold. There is a shell likewise here, a univalve of the species of volutes, which sells

at a cuba for 10 paras. It is brought from near Hodeida, though it is sometimes found at Konfodah and Loheia. There are a few also at Dahalac, but not esteemed: these pass for money among the Djawi and other western Gallas.

THE cuba is a wooden measure, containing, very exactly, 62 cubic inches of rain water. The drachm is called Casla; there is 10 drachms in their wakea.

Gold, 16 patakas *per* wakea.

Civet,  $1\frac{3}{4}$  pataka the wakea.

Elephants teeth, 18 patakas for 35 rotol.

Wax, 4 patakas the faranzala.

Myrrh, 3 patakas *per* ditto.

Coffee, 1 pataka the 6 rotol.

Honey,  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a pataka the cuba.

THE Banians were once the principal merchants of Masuah; but the number is now reduced to six. They are silver-smiths, that make ear-rings and other ornaments for the women in the continent, and are assayers of gold; they make, however, but a poor livelihood.

As there is no water in Masuah, the number of animals belonging to it can be but small. The sea fowl have nothing singular in them, and are the grey and the white gull, and the small bird, called the sea-lark, or pickerel. The sky-lark is here, but is mute the whole year, till the first rains fall in November; he then mounts very high, and sings in the very heat of the day. I saw him in the Tchamma, but he did not sing there; probably for the reason given above, as there was no rain.

THERE are no sparrows to be seen here, or on the opposite shore, nor in the islands. Although there were scorpions in abundance at Loheia, we found none of them at Masuah. Water and greens, especially of the melon and cucumber kind, seem to be necessary to this poisonous insect. Indeed it was only after rains we saw them in Loheia, and then the young ones appeared in swarms; this was in the end of August. They are of a dull green colour, bordering upon yellow. As far as I could observe, no person apprehended any thing from their sting beyond a few minutes pain.

WE left Masuah the 10th of November, with the soldiers and boats belonging to Achmet. We had likewise three servants from Abyssinia, and no longer apprehended the Naybe, who seemed, on his part, to think no more of us.

IN the bay between Masuah and Arkeeko are two islands, Toulahout and Shekh Seide; the first on the west, the other on the south. They are both uninhabited, and without water. Shekh Seide has a marabout, or saint's tomb, on the west end. It is not half a mile in length, when not overflowed, but has two large points of sand which run far out to the east and to the west. Its west point runs so near to Toulahout, as, at low-water, scarce to leave a channel for the breadth of a boat to pass between.

THERE is a chart, or map of the island of Masuah, handed about with other bad maps and charts of the Red Sea, (of which I have already spoken) among our English captains from India. It seems to be of as old date as the first landing of the Portuguese under Don Roderigo de Lima, in the time of David III. but it is very inaccurate, or rather erroneous,

roncous, throughout. The map of the island, harbour, and bay, with the foundings, which I here have given, may be depended upon, as being done on the spot with the greatest attention.

ACHMET, though much better, was, however, not well. His fever had left him, but he had some symptoms of its being followed by a dysentery. In the two days I rested at his house, I had endeavoured to remove these complaints, and had succeeded in part; for which he testified the utmost gratitude, as he was wonderfully afraid to die.

THE Naybe had visited him several times every day; but as I was desirous to see Achmet well before I left Arkeeko, I kept out of the way on these occasions, being resolved, the first interview, to press for an immediate departure.

ON the 13th, at four o'clock in the afternoon, I waited upon the Naybe at his own house. He received me with more civility than usual, or rather, I should have said, with less brutality; for a grain of any thing like civility had never yet appeared in his behaviour. He had just received news, that a servant of his, sent to collect money at Hama-zen, had run off with it. As I saw he was busy, I took my leave of him, only asking his commands for Habesh; to which he answered, "We have time enough to think of that, do you come here to morrow."

ON the 14th, in the morning, I waited upon him according to appointment, having first struck my tent and got all my baggage in readiness. He received me as before, then told me with a grave air, "that he was willing to further my



journey into Habesh to the utmost of his power, provided I shewed him that consideration which was due to him from all passengers ; that as, by my tent, baggage, and arms, he saw I was a man above the common sort, which the grand signior's firman, and all my letters testified, less than 1000 patakas offered by me would be putting a great affront upon him ; however, in consideration of the governor of Tigrè, to whom I was going, he would consent to receive 300, upon my swearing not to divulge this, for fear of the shame that would fall upon him abroad.

To this I answered in the same grave tone, " That I thought him very wrong to take 300 patakas with shame, when receiving a thousand would be more honourable as well as more profitable ; therefore he had nothing to do but put that into his account-book with the governor of Tigrè, and settle his honour and his interest together. As for myself, I was sent for by Metical Aga, on account of the king, and was proceeding accordingly, and if he opposed my going forward to Metical Aga, I should return ; but then again I should expect ten thousand patakas from Metical Aga, for the trouble and loss of time I had been at, which he and the Ras would no doubt settle with him." The Naybe said nothing in reply, but only muttered, closing his teeth, *shetan afrit*, that devil or tormenting spirit.

" Look you, (says one of the king's servants, whom I had not heard speak before) I was ordered to bring this man to my matter ; I heard no talk of patakas ; the army is ready to march against Waragna Fasil, I must not lose my time here." Then taking his short red cloak under his arm, and giving it a shake to make the dust fly from it, he put  
it

it upon his shoulders, and, stretching out his hand very familiarly, said, "Naybe, within this hour I am for Habesh, my companion will stay here with the man; give me my dues for coming here, and I shall carry any answer either of you has to send." The Naybe looked much disconcerted. "Besides, said I, you owe me 300 patakas for saving the life of your nephew Achmet."—"Is not his life worth 300 patakas?" He looked very silly, and said, "Achmet's life is worth all Masuah." There was no more talk of patakas after this. He ordered the king's servant not to go that day, but come to him to-morrow to receive his letters, and he would expedite us for Habesh.

THOSE friends that I had made at Arkeeko and Masuah, seeing the Naybe's obstinacy against our departure, and, knowing the cruelty of his nature, advised me to abandon all thoughts of Abyssinia; for that, in passing through Samhar, among the many barbarous people whom he commanded, difficulties would multiply upon us daily, and, either by accident, or order of the Naybe, we should surely be cut off.

I WAS too well convinced of the embarrassment that lay behind me if left alone with the Naybe, and too determined upon my journey to hesitate upon going forward. I even flattered myself, that his stock of stratagems to prevent our going, was by this time exhausted, and that the morrow would see us in the open fields, free from further tyranny and controul. In this conjecture I was warranted by the visible impression the declaration of the king's servant had made upon him.

ON the 15th, early in the morning, I struck my tent again, and had my baggage prepared, to shew we were determined to stay no longer. At eight o'clock, I went to the Naybe, and found him almost alone, when he received me in a manner that, for him, might have passed for civil. He began with a considerable degree of eloquence, or fluency of speech, a long enumeration of the difficulties of our journey, the rivers, precipices, mountains, and woods we were to pass; the number of wild beasts every where to be found; as also the wild savage people that inhabited those places; the most of which, he said, were luckily under his command, and he would recommend to them to do us all manner of good offices. He commanded two of his secretaries to write the proper letters, and, in the mean time, ordered us coffee; conversing naturally enough about the king and Ras Michael, their campaign against Fasil, and the great improbability there was, they should be successful.

AT this time came in a servant covered with dust and seemingly fatigued, as having arrived in haste from afar. The Naybe, with a considerable deal of uneasiness and confusion, opened the letters, which were said to bring intelligence, that the Hazorta, Shiho, and Tora, the three nations who possessed that part of Samhar through which our road led to Dobarwa, the common passage from Masuah to Tigre, had revolted, driven away his servants, and declared themselves independent. He then, (as if all was over) ordered his secretaries to stop writing; and, lifting up his eyes, began, with great seeming devotion, to thank God we were not already on our journey; for, innocent as he was, when we should have

have been cut off, the fault would have been imputed to him.

ANGRY as I was at so barefaced a farce, I could not help bursting out into a violent fit of loud laughter, when he put on the severest countenance, and desired to know the reason of my laughing at such a time. It is now two months, answered I, since you have been throwing various objections in my way ; can you wonder that I do not give into so gross an imposition ? This same morning, before I struck my tent, in presence of your nephew Achmet, I spoke with two Shiho just arrived from Samhar, who brought letters to Achmet, which said all was in peace. Have you earlier intelligence than that of this morning ?

HE was for some time without speaking ; then said, " If you are weary of living, you are welcome to go ; but I will do my duty in warning those that are along with you of their and your danger, that, when the mischief happens, it may not be imputed to me." " No number of naked Shiho," said I, " unless instructed by you, can ever be found on our road, that will venture to attack us. The Shiho have no fire arms ; but if you have sent on purpose some of your soldiers that have fire arms, these will discover by what authority they come. For our part, we cannot fly ; we neither know the country, the language, nor the watering-places, and we shall not attempt it. We have plenty of different sorts of fire-arms, and your servants have often seen at Masuah we are not ignorant in the use of them. We, it is true, may lose our lives, that is in the hand of the Almighty ; but we shall not fail to leave enough on the spot, to give sufficient indication to the king and Ras Michael, who,

who it was that were our assassins, Janni of Adowa will explain the rest."

I THEN rose very abruptly to go away. It is impossible to give one, not conversant with these people, any conception what perfect masters the most clownish and beastly among them are of dissimulation. The countenance of the Naybe now changed in a moment. In his turn he burst out into a loud fit of laughter, which surprised me full as much as mine, some time before, had done him. Every feature of his treacherous countenance was altered and softened into complacency ; and he, for the first time, bore the appearance of a man.

" WHAT I mentioned about the Shiho, he then said, was but to try you ; all is peace. I only wanted to keep you here, if possible, to cure my nephew Achmet, and his uncle Emir Mahomet ; but since you are resolved to go, be not afraid ; the roads are safe enough. I will give you a person to conduct you, that will carry you in safety, even if there was danger ; only go and prepare such remedies as may be proper for the Emir, and leave them with my nephew Achmet, while I finish my letters." This I willingly consented to do, and at my return I found every thing ready.

OUR guide was a handsome young man, to whom, though a Christian, the Naybe had married his sister ; his name was Saloomé. The common price paid for such a conductor is three pieces of blue Surat cotton cloth. The Naybe, however, obliged us to promise thirteen to his brother-in-law, with which, to get rid of him with some degree of good grace, we willingly complied.

BEFORE our setting out I told this to Achmet, who said, that the man was not a bad one naturally, but that his uncle the Naybe made all men as wicked as himself. He furnished me with a man to shew me where I should pitch my tent; and told me he should now take my final deliverance upon himself, for we were yet far, according to the Naybe's intentions, from beginning our journey to Gondar.

ARKEEKO consists of about 400 houses, a few of which are built of clay, the rest of coarse grafs like reeds. The Naybe's house is of these last-named materials, and not distinguished from any others in the town; it stands upon the S. W. side of a large bay. There is water enough for large ships close to Arkeeko, but the bay being open to the N. E. makes it uneasy riding in blowing weather. Besides, you are upon a lee-shore; the bottom is composed of soft sand. In standing in upon Arkeeko from the sea through the canal between Shekh Seide and the main land, it is necessary to range the coast about a third nearer the main than the island. The point, or Shekh Seide, stretches far out, and has shallow water upon it.

THE Cape that forms the south-west side of the large bay is called *Ras Gedom*, being the rocky base of a high mountain of that name, seen a considerable distance from sea, and distinguished by its form, which is that of a hog's back.



## CHAP. III.

*Journey from Arkeeko, over the mountain Taranta, to Dixan.*

ACCORDING to Achmet's desire, we left Arkeeko the 15th, taking our road southward, along the plain, which is not here above a mile broad, and covered with short grass nothing different from ours, only that the blade is broader. After an hour's journey I pitched my tent at Laberhey, near a pit of rain-water. The mountains of Abyssinia have a singular aspect from this, as they appear in three ridges. The first is of no considerable height, but full of gullies and broken ground, thinly covered with shrubs; the second, higher and steeper, still more rugged and bare; the third is a row of sharp, uneven-edged mountains, which would be counted high in any country in Europe. Far above the top of all, towers that stupendous mass, the mountain of Taranta, I suppose one of the highest in the world, the point of which is buried in the clouds, and very rarely seen but in the clearest weather; at other times abandoned to perpetual mist and darkness, the seat of lightning, thunder, and of storm.

TARANTA is the highest of a long, steep ridge of mountains, the boundary between *the opposite seasons*. On its east side, or towards the Red Sea, the rainy season is from October to April; and, on the western, or Abyssinian side, cloudy, rainy, and cold weather prevails from May to October.

IN the evening, a messenger from the Naybe found us at our tent at Laberhey, and carried away our guide Saloomé. It was not till the next day that he appeared again, and with him Achmet, the Naybe's nephew. Achmet made us deliver to him the thirteen pieces of Surat cloth, which was promised Saloomé for his hire, and this, apparently, with that person's good-will. He then changed four of the men whom the Naybe had furnished us for hire to carry our baggage, and put four others in their place; this, not without some murmuring on their part; but he peremptorily, and in seeming anger, dispatched them back to Arkceko.

ACHMET now came into the tent, called for coffee, and, while drinking it, said, " You are sufficiently persuaded that I am your friend; if you are not, it is too late now to convince you. It is necessary, however, to explain the reasons of what you see. You are not to go to Dobarwa, though it is the best road, the safest being preferable to the easiest. Saloomé knows the road by Dixan as well as the other. You will be apt to curse me when you are toiling and sweating ascending Taranta, the highest mountain in Abyssinia, and on this account worthy your notice. You are then to consider if the fatigue of body you then suffer in that passage is not overpaid by the absolute safety you will find yourselves in. Dobarwa belongs to the Naybe, and I



cannot answer for the orders he may have given to his own servants; but Dixan is mine, although the people are much worse than those of Dobarwa. I have written to my officers there; they will behave the better to you for this; and, as you are strong and robust, the best I can do for you is to send you by a rugged road, and a safe one.

ACHMET again gave his orders to Saloomé, and we, all rising, said the fedtah, or *prayer of peace*; which being over, his servant gave him a narrow web of muslin, which, with his own hands, he wrapped round my head in the manner the better sort of Mahometans wear it at Dixan. He then parted, saying, "He that is your enemy is mine also; you shall hear of me by Mahomet Gibberti."

THIS finished a series of trouble and vexation, not to say danger, superior to any thing I ever before had experienced, and of which the bare recital (though perhaps too minute a one) will give but an imperfect idea. These wretches possess talents for tormenting and alarming, far beyond the power of belief; and, by laying a true sketch of them before a traveller, an author does him the most real service. In this country the more truly we draw the portrait of man, the more we seem to fall into caricatura.

ON the 16th, in the evening, we left Laberhey; and, after continuing about an hour along the plain, our grass ended, the ground becoming dry, firm, and gravelly, and we then entered into a wood of acacia-trees of considerable size. We now began to ascend gradually, having Gedom, the high mountain which forms the bay of Arkecko, on our left, and these same mountains, which bound the plain of Arkecko to  
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the west, on our right. We encamped this night on a rising-ground called Shillokeeb, where there is no water, though the mountains were everywhere cut through with gullies and water courses, made by the violent rains that fall here in winter.

THE 17th, we continued along the same plain, still covered thick with acacia-trees. They were then in blossom, had a round yellow flower, but we saw no gum upon the trees. Our direction had hitherto been south. We turned westerly through an opening in the mountains, which here stand so close together as to leave no valley or plain space between them but what is made by the torrents, in the rainy season, forcing their way with great violence to the sea.

THE bed of the torrent was our only road; and, as it was all sand, we could not wish for a better. The moisture it had strongly imbibed protected it from the sudden effects of the sun, and produced, all along its course, a great degree of vegetation and verdure. Its banks were full of rack-trees, capers, and tamarinds; the two last bearing larger fruit than I had ever before seen, though not arrived to their greatest size or maturity.

WE continued this winding, according to the course of the river, among mountains of no great height, but bare, stony, and full of terrible precipices. At half past eight o'clock we halted, to avoid the heat of the sun, under shade of the trees before mentioned, for it was then excessively hot, though in the month of November, from ten in the morning till two in the afternoon. We met this day with large numbers of Shiho, having their wives and families  
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along with them, descending from the tops of the high mountains of Habesh, with their flocks to pasture, on the plains below near the sea, upon grafs that grows up in the months of October and November, when they have already consumed what grew in the opposite season on the other side of the mountains.

THIS change of domicil gives them a propensity to thieving and violence, though otherwise a cowardly tribe. It is a proverb in Abyssinia, "Beware of men that drink *two* waters," meaning these, and all the tribes of *Shepherds*, who were in search of pasture, and who have lain under the same imputation from the remotest antiquity.

THE Shiho were once very numerous ; but, like all these nations having communication with Masuah, have suffered much by the ravages of the small-pox. The Shiho are the blackest of the tribes bordering upon the Red Sea. They were all clothed ; their women in coarse cotton shifts reaching down to their ancles, girt about the middle with a leather belt, and having very large sleeves ; the men in short cotton breeches reaching to the middle of their thighs, and a goat's skin cross their shoulders. They have neither tents nor cottages, but either live in caves in the mountains under trees, or in small conical huts built with a thick grafs like reeds.

THIS party consisted of about fifty men, and, I suppose, not more than thirty women ; from which it seemed probable the Shiho are Monogam, as afterwards, indeed ; I knew them to be. Each of them had a lance in his hand, and a knife at the girdle which kept up the breeches. They had

had the superiority of the ground, as coming down the mountain which we were ascending; yet I observed them to seem rather uneasy at meeting us; and so far from any appearance of hostility, that, I believe, had we attacked briskly, they would have fled without much resistance. They were, indeed, incumbered with a prodigious quantity of goats and other cattle, so were not in a fighting trim. I saluted the man that seemed to be their chief, and asked him if he would sell us a goat. He returned my salute; but either could not speak Arabic, or declined further conversation. However, those of our people behind, that were of a colour nearer to themselves, bought us a goat that was lame, (dearly they said) for some antimony, four large needles, and some beads. Many of them asked us for *kissrab*, or bread. This being an Arabic word, and their having no other word in their language signifying bread, convinces me they were Ichthyophagi; as, indeed, history says all those Troglydite nations were who lived upon the Red Sea. It could not indeed be otherwise: the rich, when trade flourished in these parts, would probably get corn from Arabia or Abyssinia; but, in their own country, no corn would grow.

At 2 o'clock in the afternoon we resumed our journey through a very stony, uneven road, till 5 o'clock, when we pitched our tent at a place called Hamhammou, on the side of a small green hill some hundred yards from the bed of the torrent. The weather had been perfectly good since we left Masuah: this afternoon, however, it seemed to threaten rain; the high mountains were quite hid, and great part of the lower ones covered with thick clouds; the lightning was very frequent, broad, and deep-tinged with blue; and long peals of thunder were heard, but at a distance.

tance. This was the first sample we had of Abyssinian bad weather.

THE river scarcely ran at our passing it; when, all on a sudden, we heard a noise on the mountains above, louder than the loudest thunder. Our guides, upon this, flew to the baggage, and removed it to the top of the green hill; which was no sooner done, than we saw the river coming down in a stream about the height of a man, and breadth of the whole bed it used to occupy. The water was thick tinged with red earth, and ran in the form of a deep river, and swelled a little above its banks, but did not reach our station on the hill.

AN antelope, surprised by the torrent, and I believe hurt by it, was forced over into the peninsula where we were, seemingly in great distress. As soon as my companions saw there was no further danger from the river, they surrounded this innocent comrade in misfortune, and put him to death with very little trouble to themselves. The acquisition was not great; it was lean, had a musky taste, and was worse meat than the goat we had bought from the Shiho. The torrent, though now very sensibly diminished, still preserved a current till next morning.

BETWEEN Hamhammou and Shillokeeb we first saw the dung of elephants, full of pretty thick pieces of indigested branches. We likewise, 'in many places, saw the tracks thro' which they had passed; some trees were thrown down from the roots, some broken in the middle, and branches half-eaten strewed on the ground.

HAMHAMMOU is a mountain of black stones, almost calcined by the violent heat of the sun. This is the boundary of the district; Samhar, inhabited by the Shiho from Hamhammou to Taranta, is called Hadassa; it belongs to the Hazorta.

THIS nation, though not so numerous as the Shiho, are yet their neighbours, live in constant defiance of the Naybe, and are of a colour much resembling new copper; but are inferior to the Shiho in size, though very agile. All their substance is in cattle; yet they kill none of them, but live entirely upon milk. They, too, want also an original word for bread in their language, for the same reason, I suppose, as the Shiho. They have been generally successful against the Naybe, and live either in caves, or in cabannes, like cages, just large enough to hold two persons, and covered with an ox's hide. Some of the better sort of women have copper bracelets upon their arms, beads in their hair, and a tanned hide wrapt about their shoulders.

THE nights are cold here even in summer, and do not allow the inhabitants to go naked as upon the rest of the coast; however, the children of the Shiho, whom we met first, were all naked.

THE 18th, at half past five in the morning, we left our station on the side of the green hill at Hamhammou: for some time our road lay through a plain so thick set with acacia-trees that our hands and faces were all torn and bloody with the strokes of their thorny branches. We then resumed our ancient road in the bed of the torrent, now nearly

ly dry, over stones which the rain of the preceding night had made very slippery.

At half past seven we came to the mouth of a narrow valley, through which a stream of water ran very swiftly over a bed of pebbles. It was the first clear water we had seen since we left Syria, and gave us then unspeakable pleasure. It was in taste excellent. The shade of the tamarind-tree, and the coolness of the air, invited us to rest on this delightful spot, though otherwise, perhaps, it was not exactly conformable to the rules of prudence, as we saw several huts and families of the Hazorta along the side of the stream, with their flocks feeding on the branches of trees and bushes, entirely neglectful of the grass they were treading under foot.

THE caper-tree here grows as high as the tallest English elm; its flower is white, and its fruit, though not ripe, was fully as large as an apricot.

I WENT some distance to a small pool of water in order to bathe, and took my firelock with me; but none of the savages stirred from their huts, nor seemed to regard me more than if I had lived among them all their lives, though surely I was the most extraordinary sight they had ever seen; whence I concluded that they are a people of small talents or genius, having no curiosity.

At two o'clock we continued our journey, among large timber trees, till half past three, along the side of the rivulet, when we lost it. At half past four we pitched our tent at Sadoon, by the side of another stream, as clear, as shallow,

and as beautiful as the first; but the night here was exceedingly cold, though the sun had been hot in the day-time. Our desire for water was, by this time, considerably abated. We were everywhere surrounded by mountains, bleak, bare, black, and covered with loose stones, entirely destitute of soil; and, besides this gloomy prospect, we saw nothing but the heavens.

On the 19th, at half past six in the morning, we left Sadoon, our road still winding between mountains in the bed, or torrent of a river, bordered on each side with rack and fycamore trees of a good size. I thought them equal to the largest trees I had ever seen; but upon considering, and roughly measuring some of them, I did not find one 7½ feet diameter; a small tree in comparison of those that some travellers have observed, and much smaller than I expected; for here every cause concurred that should make the growth of these large bodies excessive.

At half past eight o'clock, we encamped at a place called Tubbo, where the mountains are very steep, and broken, very abruptly, into cliffs and precipices. Tubbo was by much the most agreeable station we had seen; the trees were thick, full of leaves, and gave us abundance of very dark shade. There was a number of many different kinds so closely planted that they seemed to be intended for natural arbours. Every tree was full of birds, variegated with an infinity of colours, but destitute of song; others, of a more homely and more European appearance, diverted us with a variety of wild notes, in a stile of music still distinct and peculiar to Africa; as different in the composition from our linnet and goldfinch, as our English language is to that



of Abyssinia: Yet, from very attentive and frequent observation, I found that the sky-lark at Masuah sang the same notes as in England. It was observable, that the greatest part of the beautiful painted birds were of the jay, or magpie kind: nature seemed, by the fineness of their dress, to have marked them for children of noise and impertinence, but never to have intended them for pleasure or meditation.

THE reason of the Hazorta making, as it were, a fixed station here at Tubbo, seems to be the great exuberancy of the foliage of these large trees. Their principal occupation seemed to be to cut down the branches most within their reach; and this, in a dry season, nearly stripped every tree; and, upon failure of these, they remove their flocks, whatever quantity of grass remained.

THE fycamores constitute a large proportion of these trees, and they are everywhere loaded with figs; but the process of caprification being unknown to these savages, these figs come to nothing, which else might be a great resource for food at times, in a country which seems almost destitute of the necessaries of life.

WE left Tubbo at three o'clock in the afternoon, and we wished to leave the neighbourhood of the Hazorta. At four, we encamped at Lila, where we passed the night in a narrow valley, full of trees and brushwood, by the side of a rivulet. These small, but delightful streams, which appear on the plain between Taranta and the sea, run only after October. When the summer rains in Abyssinia are ceasing, they begin again on the east side of the mountains; at other

times, no running water is to be found here, but it remains stagnant in large pools, whilst its own depth, or the shade of the mountains and trees, prevent it from being exhaled by the heat of the sun till they are again replenished with fresh supplies, which are poured into them upon return of the rainy season. Hitherto we had constantly ascended from our leaving Arkeeko, but it was very gradually, indeed almost imperceptibly.

ON the 20th, at six o'clock in the morning, we left our station at Lila, and about seven we began to ascend the hills, or eminences, which serve as the roots or skirts of the great mountain Taranta. The road was on each side bordered with nabca, or jujeb trees of great beauty, and fycamores perfectly deprived of their verdure and branches.

WE saw to-day plenty of game. The country here is everywhere deprived of the shade it would enjoy from these fine trees, by the barbarous axes of the Hazorta. We found everywhere immense flocks of antelopes; as also partridges of a small kind that willingly took refuge upon trees; neither of these seemed to consider us as enemies. The antelopes let us pass through their flocks, only removing to the right or to the left, or standing still and gazing upon us till we passed. But, as we were then on the confines of Tigrè, or rather on the territory of the Baharna'gash, and as the Hazorta were in motion everywhere removing towards the coast, far from the dominions of the Abyssinians to which we were going, a friend of their own tribe, who had joined us for safety, knowing how little trust was to be put in his countrymen when moving in this contrary direction, advised us by no means to fire, or give any unnecessary indication

tion of the spot where we were, till we gained the mountain of Taranta, at the foot of which we halted at nine in the morning.

At half past two o'clock in the afternoon we began to ascend the mountain, through a most rocky, uneven road, if it can deserve the name, not only from its incredible steepness, but from the large holes and gullies made by the torrents, and the huge monstrous fragments of rocks which, loosened by the water, had been tumbled down into our way. It was with great difficulty we could creep up, each man carrying his knapsack and arms; but it seemed beyond the possibility of human strength to carry our baggage and instruments. Our tent, indeed, suffered nothing by its falls; but our telescopes, time-keeper, and quadrant, were to be treated in a more deliberate and tender manner. .

Our quadrant had hitherto been carried by eight men, four to relieve each other; but these were ready to give up the undertaking upon trial of the first few hundred yards. A number of expedients, such as trailing it on the ground, (all equally fatal to the instrument) were proposed. At last, as I was incomparably the strongest of the company, as well as the most interested, I, and a stranger Moor who had followed us, carried the head of it for about 400 yards over the most difficult and steepest part of the mountain, which before had been considered as impracticable by all.

YASINE was the name of that Moor, recommended to me by Metical-Aga, of whom I have already spoken a little, and shall be obliged to say much more; a person whom I had discovered to be a man of a most sagacious turn of mind, firm

firm heart, and strenuous nerves ; never more distinguished for all these qualities than in the hour of imminent danger ; at other times remarkable for quietness and silence, and a constant study of his Koran.

We carried it steadily up the steep, eased the case gently over the big stones on which, from time to time, we rested it ; and, to the wonder of them all, placed the head of the three-foot quadrant, with its double case, in safety far above the stony parts of the mountain. At Yafine's request we again undertook the next most difficult task, which was to carry the iron foot of the quadrant in a single deal-case, not so heavy, indeed, nor so liable to injury, but still what had been pronounced impossible to carry up so steep and rugged a mountain ; and refusing then the faint offers of those that stood gazing below, excusing themselves by foretelling an immediate and certain miscarriage, we placed the second case about ten yards above the first in perfect good condition.

DECLARING ourselves now without fear of contradiction, and, by the acknowledgment of all, upon fair proof, the two best men in the company, we returned, bearing very visibly the characters of such an exertion ; our hands and knees were all cut, mangled, and bleeding, with sliding down and clambering over the sharp points of the rocks ; our clothes torn to pieces ; yet we professed our ability, without any reproaches on our comrades, to carry the two telescopes and time-keeper also. Shame, and the proof of superior constancy, so much humbled the rest of our companions, that one and all put their hands so briskly to work, that, with infinite toil, and as much pleasure, we advanced so far as to place.

place all our instruments and baggage, about two o'clock in the afternoon, near half way up this terrible mountain of Taranta.

THERE were five asses, two of which belonged to Yafine, and these were fully as difficult to bring up the mountain as any of our burdens. Most of their loading, the property of Yafine, we carried up the length of my instruments ; and it was proposed, as a thing that one man could do, to make the unladen light asses follow, as they had been well taken care of, were vigorous and young, and had not suffered by the short journies we had made on plain ground. They no sooner, however, found themselves at liberty, and that a man was compelling them with a stick to ascend the mountain, than they began to bray, to kick, and to bite each other ; and, as it were with one consent, not only ran down the part of the hill we had ascended, but, with the same jovial cries as before, (smelling, I suppose, some of their companions) they continued on at a brisk trot ; and, as we supposed, would never stop till they came to Tubbo, and the huts of the Hazorta.

ALL our little caravan, and especially the masters of these animals, saw from above, in despair, all our eagerness to pass Taranta defeated by the secession of the most obstinate of the brute creation. But there was no mending this by reflection ; at the same time, we were so tired as to make it impossible for the principals to give any assistance. Bread was to be baked, and supper to be made ready, after this fatiguing journey.

At length four Moors, one of them a servant of Yafine, with one firelock, were sent down after the asses; and the men were ordered to fire at a distance, so as to be heard in case any thing dishonest was offered on the part of the Hazorta. But luckily the appetite of the asses returning, they had fallen to eat the bushes, about half way to Lila, where they were found a little before sun-set.

THE number of hyænas that are everywhere among the bushes, had, as we supposed, been seen by these animals, and had driven them all into a body. It was probable that this, too, made them more docile, so that they suffered themselves to be driven on before their masters. The hyænas, however, followed them step by step, always increasing in number; and, the men, armed only with lances, began to be fully as much afraid for themselves as for the asses. At last the hyænas became so bold, that one of them seized the ass belonging to the poor Moor, whose cargo was yet lying at the foot of Taranta, and pulled him down, though the man ran to him and relieved him with lances. This would have begun a general engagement with the hyænas, had not Yafine's man that carried the firelock discharged it amongst them, but missed them all. However, it answered the purpose; they disappeared, and left the asses and ass-drivers to pursue their way.

THE shot, for a moment, alarmed us all upon the mountain. Every man ran to his arms to prepare for the coming of the Hazorta; but a moment's reflection upon the short time the men had been away, the distance between us and Tubbo, and the small space that it seemed to be from where the gun was fired, made us all conclude the man had only intended.

tended by the shot to let us know they were at hand, tho' it was not till near midnight before our long-eared companions joined their masters.

WE found it impossible to pitch our tents, from the extreme weariness in which our last night's exertion had left us: But there was another reason also; for there was not earth enough covering the bare sides of Taranta to hold fast a tent-pin; but there were variety of caves near us, and throughout the mountain, which had served for houses to the old inhabitants; and in these found a quiet and not inconvenient place of repose, the night of the 20th of November.

ALL this side of the mountain of Taranta, which we had passed, was thick-set with a species of tree which we had never before seen, but which was of uncommon beauty and curious composition of parts; its name is *kol-quall*\*. Though we afterwards met it in several places of Abyssinia, it never was in the perfection we now saw it in Taranta.

ON the 21st, at half past six in the morning, having encouraged my company with good words, increase of wages, and hopes of reward, we began to encounter the other half of the mountain, but, before we set out, seeing that the ass of the stranger Moor, which was bit by the hyæna, was incapable of carrying his loading further, I desired the rest every one to bear a proportion of the loading till we should arrive

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See the article *kol-quall* in the appendix.

arrive at Dixan, where I promised to procure him another which might enable him to continue his journey.

THIS propofal gave univerfal fatisfaction to our Mahometan attendants. Yafine fwore that my conduct was a reproach to them all, for that, though a Chriftian, I had fet them an example of charity to their poor brother, highly neceffary to procure God's bleffing upon their journey, but which fhould properly have come firft from themfelves. After a great deal of strife of kindnefs, it was agreed that I fhould pay one-third, that the lame afs fhould go for what it was worth, and the Moors of the caravan make up the difference.

THIS being ended, I foon perceived the good effect. My baggage moved much more briskly than the preceding day. The upper part of the mountain was, indeed, fteeper, more craggy, rugged, and flippery than the lower, and impeded more with trees, but not embarrassed fo much with large ftones and holes. Our knees and hands, however, were cut to pieces by frequent falls, and our faces torn by the multitude of thorny bufhes. I twenty times now thought of what Achmet had told me at parting, that I fhould curfe him for the bad road fhewn to me over Taranta; but blefs him for the quiet and fafety attending me in that paffage.

THE middle of the mountain was thinner of trees than the two extremes; they were chiefly wild olives which bear no fruit. The upper part was clofe covered with groves of the oxy cedrus, the Virginia, or berry-bearing cedar, in the language of the country called Arze. At laft we gained the top of the mountain, upon which is fituated a small vil-



lage called Halai, the first we had seen since our leaving Masuah. It is chiefly inhabited by poor servants and shepherds keeping the flocks of men of substance living in the town of Dixan.

THE people here are not black, but of a dark complexion bordering very much upon yellow. They have their head bare; their feet covered with sandals; a goat's skin upon their shoulders; a cotton cloth about their middle; their hair short and curled like that of a negroe's in the west part of Africa; but this is done by art, not by nature, each man having a wooden stick with which he lays hold of the lock and twists it round a screw, till it curls in the form he desires\*. The men carry in their hands two lances and a large shield of bull's hide. A crooked knife, the blade in the lower part about three inches broad, but diminishing to a point about sixteen inches long, is stuck at their right side, in a girdle of coarse cotton cloth, with which their middle is swathed, going round them six times.

ALL sorts of cattle are here in great plenty; cows and bulls of exquisite beauty, especially the former; they are, for the most part, completely white, with large dewlaps hanging down to their knees; their heads, horns, and hoofs perfectly well-turned; the horns wide like our Lincolnshire kine; and their hair like silk. Their sheep are large; and all black. I never saw one of any other colour in the province of Tigré. Their heads are large; their ears remarkably

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\* I apprehend this is the same instrument used by the ancients, and censured by the prophets, which, in our translation, is rendered crisping-pins. Isa. chap. iii. ver. 22.

bly short and small; instead of the wool they have hair, as all the sheep within the tropics have, but this is remarkable for its lustre and softness, without any bristly quality, such as those in Beja, or the country of Sennaar; but they are neither so fat, nor is their flesh so good, as that of the sheep in the warmer country. The goats here, too, are of the largest size; but they are not very rough, nor is their hair long.

THE plain on the top of the mountain Taranta was, in many places, sown with wheat, which was then ready to be cut down, though the harvest was not yet begun. The grain was clean, and of a good colour, but inferior in size to that of Egypt. It did not, however, grow thick, nor was the stalk above fourteen inches high. The water is very bad on the top of Taranta, being only what remains of the rain in the hollows of the rocks, and in pits prepared for it.

BEING very tired, we pitched our tent on the top of the mountain. The night was remarkably cold, at least appeared so to us, whose pores were opened by the excessive heat of Mafuah; for at mid-day the thermometer stood  $61^{\circ}$ , and at six in the evening  $59^{\circ}$ ; the barometer, at the same time,  $18\frac{1}{2}$  inches French. The dew began to fall strongly, and so continued till an hour after sun-set, though the sky was perfectly clear, and the smallest stars discernible.

I KILLED a large eagle here this evening, about six feet ten inches from wing to wing. It seemed very tame till shot. The ball having wounded it but slightly, when on the ground it could not be prevented from attacking the

men or beasts near it with great force and fierceness, so that I was obliged to stab it with a bayonet. It was of a dirty white; only the head and upper part of its wings were of a light brown.

ON the 22d, at eight in the morning, we left our station on the top of Taranta, and soon after began to descend on the side of Tigré through a road the most broken and uneven that ever I had seen, always excepting the ascent of Taranta. After this we began to mount a small hill, from which we had a distinct view of Dixan.

THE cedar-trees, so tall and beautiful on the top of Taranta, and also on the east side, were greatly degenerated when we came to the west, and mostly turned into small shrubs and scraggy bushes. We pitched our tent near some marshy ground for the sake of water, at three quarters past ten, but it was very bad, having been, for several weeks, stagnant. We saw here the people busy at their wheat harvest; others, who had finished theirs, were treading it out with cows or bullocks. They make no use of their straw; sometimes they burn it, and sometimes leave it on the spot to rot.

WE set out from this about ten minutes after three, descending gently through a better road than we had hitherto seen. At half past four in the evening, on the 22d of November, we came to Dixan. Halai was the first village, so is this the first town in Abyssinia, on the side of Taranta. Dixan is built on the top of a hill, perfectly in form of a sugar loaf; a deep valley surrounds it everywhere like a trench;

trench, and the road winds spirally up the hill till it ends among the houses.

THIS town, with a large district, and a considerable number of villages, belonged formerly to the Baharnagash, and was one of the strong places under his command. Afterwards, when his power came to be weakened, and his office in disrepute by his treasonable behaviour in the war of the Turks, and civil war that followed it, during the Portuguese settlement in the reign of Socinios, the Turks possessing the sea-ports, and being often in intelligence with him, it was thought proper to wink at the usurpations of the governors of Tigrè, who, little by little, reduced this office to be dependent on their power.

DIXAN, presuming upon its strength, declared for independence in the time the two parties were contending; and, as it was inhabited mostly by Mahometans, it was secretly supported by the Naybe. Michael Suhul, however, governor of Tigré, in the reign of king Yafous II. invested it with a large army of horse and foot; and, as it had no water but what was in the valley below, the general defect of these lofty situations, he surrounded the town, encamping upon the edge of the valley, and inclosed all the water within his line of circumvallation, making strong posts at every watering-place, defended by fire-arms.

HE then sent to them a buffoon, or dwarf, desiring them to surrender within two hours. The passions of the inhabitants were, however, raised by expectations of succour from the Naybe; and they detested Michael above every thing that could be imagined. They, therefore, whipt the dwarf,  
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and inflicted other marks of contumely upon him. Michael bore this with seeming indifference. He sent no more summonses, but strengthened his posts, and ordered them to be continually visited. Several attacks of no consequence were made by the besieged following large stones, which were rolled down into the trench, but all to no purpose. A general attack, however, from the town, was tried the third day, by which one well was carried, and many relieved their thirst; many died there, and the rest were forced back into the town. A capitulation was now offered; but Michael answered, he waited for the coming of the Naybe. About 700 people are said to have died, during the siege, with thirst; and at last, there being no prospect of relief, twelve of the leaders were delivered and hanged up at the wells. The town surrendered at discretion, and the soldiers finished those whom thirst had spared.

MICHAEL then farmed Dixan to the Naybe, who repeopled it. There was a high and low town, divided from each other by a considerable space. In the lower abode Christians, at least so calling themselves; on the top of the hill were the Naybe's party, who had dug for themselves a scanty well. Saloomé, our guide, was son of the governor for the Naybe. Achmet was the person the Moors in the low town had confided in; and the Christian chief was a dependent upon Janni, our Greek friend at Adowa, who had direction of all the custom-houses in Tigre, and of that at Dixan among the rest.

OUR baggage had passed the trench, and had reached the low towns through which Saloomè had conducted me, under pretence of getting a speedy shelter from the heat:

But he overacted his part ; and Janni, his servant, who spoke Greek, giving me a hint to go no further, I turned short towards the house, and sat down with my firelock upon a stone at the door. Our baggage quickly followed, and all was put safe in a kind of a court inclosed with a sufficient stone-wall.

It was not long till Hagi Abdelcader, Achmet's friend, came to us, inviting me civilly to his house, and declaring to me the friendly orders he had received from Achmet concerning me ; bringing along with him also a goat, some butter and honey. I excused myself from leaving Janni's friend, the Christian, where I had first alighted ; but I recommended Yafine to him, for he had begun to shew great attachment to me. In about a quarter of an hour came Saloomé, with about twenty men, and demanded us, in the name of the Naybe, as his strangers : he said we owed him money for conducting us, and likewise for the customhouse dues. In a moment near a hundred men were assembled round Hagi Abdelcader, all with shields and lances, and we expected to see a fray of the most serious kind. But Abdelcader, with a switch in his hand, went gravely up to Saloomé, and, after chiding his party with great authority, he held up his stick twice over Saloomé's head, as if to strike him ; then ordered him, if he had any demands, to come to him in the evening ; upon which both parties dispersed, and left us in peace.

THE matter was settled in the evening with Saloomé in an amicable manner. It was proved that thirteen pieces of blue cloth were the hire agreed on, and that it had been paid by his order to Achmet ; and, though he deserved nothing

thing for his treacherous inclinations towards us, yet, for Achmet's sake, and our friend Hagi Abdelcader's, we made him a present of three pieces more.

It is true of Dixan as, I believe, of most frontier towns, that the bad people of both contiguous countries resort thither. The town, as I before have said, consists of Moors and Christians, and is very well peopled; yet the only trade of either of these sects is a very extraordinary one, that of selling of children. The Christians bring such as they have stolen in Abyssinia to Dixan as to a sure deposit; and the Moors receive them there, and carry them to a certain market at Masuah, whence they are sent over to Arabia or India. The priests of the province of Tigré, especially those near the rock Damo, are openly concerned in this infamous practice; and some of these have been licensed by Michael to carry it on as a fair trade, upon paying so many firelocks for each dozen or score of slaves.

Nothing can elucidate the footing upon which this trade stands better than a transaction which happened while I was in Ethiopia, and which reached Gondar by way of complaint from Masuah, and was told me by Michael himself.

Two priests of Tigrè, whose names I have forgot, had been long intimate friends. They dwelt near the rock Damo. The youngest was married, and had two children, both sons; the other was old, and had none. The old one reproved his friend one day for keeping his children at home idle, and not putting them to some profession by which they might gain their bread. The married priest

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pleaded

pleaded his poverty and his want of relations that could assist him; on which, the old priest offered to place his eldest son with a rich friend of his own, who had no children, and where he should want for nothing. The proposal was accepted, and the young lad, about ten years of age, was delivered by his father to the old priest, to carry him to this friend, who sent the boy to Dixan and sold him there. Upon the old priest's return, after giving the father a splendid account of his son's reception, treatment, and prospects, he gave him a piece of cotton cloth, as a present from his son's patron.

THE younger child, about eight years old, hearing the good fortune of his elder brother, became so importunate to be allowed to go and visit him, that the parents were obliged to humour him, and consent. But the old priest had a scruple, saying he would not take the charge of so young a boy, unless his mother went with him. This being settled, the old priest conveyed them to the market at Dixan, where he sold both the mother and the remaining child.

RETURNING to the father, the old priest told him, that his wife would stay only so long, and expected he would then fetch her upon a certain day, which was named. The day being come, the two priests went together to see this happy family; and, upon their entering Dixan, it was found that the old priest had sold the young one, but not to the same Moor to whom he had sold his family. Soon after, these two Moors, who had bought the Christians, becoming partners in the venture, the old priest was to receive forty cotton-cloths, that is, L. 10 Sterling, for the husband, wife, and children.



THE payment of the money, perhaps the resentment of the family trepanned, and the appearance of equity which the thing itself bore, suggested to the Moorish merchants that there was some more profit, and not more risk, if they carried off the old priest likewise. But as he had come to Dixan, as it were under public faith, in a trade that greatly interested the town, they were afraid to attempt any thing against him whilst there. They began then as it were to repent of their bargain, from a pretended apprehension that they might be stopped and questioned at going out of town, unless he would accompany them to some small distance; in consideration of which, they would give him, at parting, two pieces of cloth to be added to the other forty, which he was to take back to Tigré with him upon his return.

THE beginning of such expeditions is in the night. When all were asleep, they set out from Dixan; the buyers, the seller, and the family fold; and, being arrived near the mountain where the way turns off to the desert, the whole party fell upon the old priest, threw him down, and bound him. The woman insisted that she might be allowed to cut, or tear off the little beard he had, in order, as she said, to make him look younger; and this demand was reckoned too just to be denied her. The whole five were then carried to Masuah; the woman and her two children were sold to Arabia; the two priests had not so ready a market, and they were both in the Naybe's house when I was at Masuah, though I did not then know it.

THE Naybe, willing to ingratiate himself with Ras Michael at a small expence, wrote to him an account of the transaction, and offered, as they were priests, to restore them

to him. But the Ras returned for answer, that the Nabye should keep them to be his chaplains ; as he hoped, some day, he would be converted to the Christian faith himself ; if not, he might send them to Arabia with the rest ; they would serve to be carriers of wood and drawers of water ; and that there still remained at Damo enough of their kind to carry on the trade with Dixan and Masuah.

THIS story I heard from Ras Michael himself, at his granddaughter's marriage, when he was feasting, and in great spirits. He, and all the company, laughed heartily ; and although there were in the room at least two dozen of priests, none of them seemed to take this incident more seriously than the rest of the company. From this we may guess at the truth of what the Catholic writers advance, with regard to the respect and reverence shown to the priesthood by the government and great men in Abyssinia.

THE priest of Axum, and those of the monastery of Abba Garima, are equally infamous with those of Damo for this practice, which is winked at by Ras Michael, as contributing to his greatness, by furnishing fire-arms to his province of Tigré, which gives him a superiority over all Abyssinia. As a return for this article, about five hundred of these unfortunate people are exported annually from Masuah to Arabia ; of which three hundred are Pagans, and come from the market at Gondar ; the other two hundred are Christian children, kidnapped by some such manner as this we have spoken of, and in times of scarcity four times that number. The Nabye receives six patakas of duty for each one exported. Dixan is in lat.  $14^{\circ} 57' 55''$  North, and long.  $40^{\circ} 7' 30''$  east of the meridian of Greenwich.

FROM Dixan we discovered great part of the province of Tigrè full of high dreadful mountains. We, as yet, had seen very little grain, unless by the way-side from Taranta, and a small flat called Zarai, about four miles S. S. W. of the town.

C H A P.



## CHAP. IV.

*Journey from Dixan to Adowa, Capital of Tigrè.*

**I**T was on Nov. 25th, at ten in the morning, we left Dixan, descending the very steep hill on which the town is situated. It produces nothing but the Kol-quall tree all around it. We passed a miserable village called Hadhadid, and, at eleven o'clock, encamped under a daroo tree, one of the finest I have seen in Abyssinia, being  $7\frac{1}{2}$  feet diameter, with a head spreading in proportion, standing alone by the side of a river which now ran no more, though there is plenty of fine water still stagnant in its bed. This tree and river is the boundary of the territory, which the Naybe farms from Tigrè, and stands within the province of Baharnagash, called Midrè Bahar.

HAGI ABDELCADER had attended us thus far before he left us; and the noted Saloomè came likewise, to see if some occasion would offer of doing us further mischief; but the king's servants, now upon their own ground, began to take upon them a proper consequence. One of them went

to meet Saloomé at the bank of the river, and making a mark on the ground with his knife, declared that his patience was quite exhausted by what he had been witness to at Masuah and Dixan; and if now Saloomé, or any other man belonging to the Naybe, offered to pass that mark, he would bind him hand and foot, and carry him to a place where he should be left tied to a tree, a prey to the lion and hyana. They all returned, and there our persecution from the Naybe ended. But it was very evident, from Achmet's behaviour and discourse, had we gone by Dobarwa, which was the road proposed by the Naybe, our sufferings would not have been as yet half finished, unless they had ended with our lives.

We remained under this tree the night of the 25th; it will be to me a station ever memorable, as the first where I recovered a portion of that tranquillity of mind to which I had been a stranger ever since my arrival at Masuah. We had been joined by about twenty loaded asses driven by Moors, and two loaded bulls; for there is a small fort of this kind called Ber, which they make use of as beasts of burden. I called all these together to recommend good order to them, desiring every one to leave me that was not resolved to obey implicitly the orders I should give them, as to the hours and places of encamping, keeping watch at night, and setting out in the morning. I appointed Yafine the judge of all disputes between them; and, if the difference should be between Yafine and any one of them, or, if they should not be content with his decision, then my determination was to be final. They all consented with great marks of approbation. We then repeated the fedtah, and swore to stand by each other till the last, without consider-

ing who the enemy might be, or what his religion was, if he attacked us.

THE 26th, at seven in the morning, we left our most pleasant quarters under the daroo-tree, and set forward with great alacrity. About a quarter of a mile from the river we crossed the end of the plain Zarai, already mentioned. Though this is but three miles long, and one where broadest, it was the largest plain we had seen since our passing Taranta, whose top was now covered wholly with large, black, and very heavy clouds, from which we heard and saw frequent peals of thunder, and violent streams of lightning. This plain was sown partly with wheat, partly with Indian corn; the first was cut down, the other not yet ripe. Two miles farther we passed Addicota, a village planted upon a high rock; the sides towards us were as if cut perpendicular like a wall. Here was one refuge of the Jesuits when banished Tigrè by Facilidas, when they fled to the rebel John Akay. We after this passed a variety of small villages on each side of us, all on the top of hills; Darcotta and Embabuwhat on the right, Azaria on the left.

At half an hour past eleven we encamped under a mountain, on the top of which is a village called Hadawi, consisting of no more than eighty houses, though, for the present, it is the seat of the Baharnagash. The present Baharnagash had bought the little district that he commanded, after the present governor of Tigré, Michael Suhul, had annexed to his own province what he pleased of the old domains, and farmed the other part to the Naybè for a larger revenue than he ever could get from any other tenant.

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The Naybe had now no longer a naval force to support him, and the fear of Turkish conquest had ceased in Tigrè. The Naybe could be reduced within any bounds that the governor of Tigrè might please to prescribe him ; and the Bahar-nagash was a servant maintained to watch over him, and starve him into obedience, by intercepting his provisions whenever the governor of Tigré commanded him.

THIS nobleman paid me a visit in my tent, and was the first Abyssinian I had seen on horseback ; he had seven attendant horsemen with him, and about a dozen of others on foot, all of a beggarly appearance, and very ill-armed and equipped. He was a little man, of an olive complexion, or rather darker ; his head was shaved close, with a cowl, or covering, upon it ; he had a pair of short trousers ; his feet and legs were bare ; the usual coarse girdle was wrapt several times about him, in which he stuck his knife ; and the ordinary web of cotton cloth, neither new nor clean, was thrown about him. His parts seemed to be much upon the level with his appearance. He asked me, if I had ever seen horses before ? I said, Very seldom. He then described their qualities in such a manner as would never have given me any idea of the animal if I had seen it seldom. He excused himself for not having sent us provisions, because he had been upon an expedition against some rebellious villages, and was then only just returned.

To judge by his present appearance, he was no very respectable personage ; but in this I was mistaken, as I afterwards found. I gave him a present in proportion to the first idea, with which he seemed very well content, till he observed a number of fire-arms tied up to the pillar in the middle

middle of the tent, among which were two large ship-blunderbusses. He asked me if there was no danger of their going off? I said, that it happened every now and then, when their time was come. A very little after this, he took the cushion upon which he sat, went out, and placed himself at the door of the tent. There the king's servant got hold of him, and told him roundly, he must furnish us with a goat, a kid, and forty loaves, and that immediately, and write it off in his deftar, or account-book, if he pleased. He then went away and sent us a goat and fifty cakes of teff bread.

BUT my views upon him did not end here. His seven horses were all in very bad order, though there was a black one among them that had particularly struck my fancy. In the evening I sent the king's servants, and Janni's, for a check, to try if he would sell that black horse. The bargain was immediately made for various pieces of goods, part of which I had with me, and part I procured from my companions in the caravan. Every thing was fashionable and new from Arabia. The value was about L. 12. Sterling, forty shillings more than our friend at Dixan had paid for a whole family of four persons. The goods were delivered, and the horse was to be sent in the evening, when he proved a brown one, old, and wanting an eye. I immediately returned the horse, insisting on the black one; but he protested the black horse was not his own; that he had returned it to its master; and, upon a little further discourse, said, that it was a horse he intended as a present for the king.

My friends treated this with great indifference, and desired their goods back again, which were accordingly delivered. But they were no sooner in the tent, when the black



horse was sent, and refused. The whole, however, was made up, by sending us another goat, which I gave to Yafine, and two jars of bouza, which we drank among us, promising, according to the Baharnagash's request, we would represent him well at court. We found, from his servants, that he had been upon no expedition, nor one step from home for three months past.

I was exceedingly pleased with this first acquisition. The horse was then lean, as he stood about sixteen and a half hands high, of the breed of Dongola. Yafine, a good horseman, recommended to me one of his servants, or companions, to take care of him. He was an Arab, from the neighbourhood of Medina, a superior horseman himself, and well-versed in every thing that concerned the animal. I took him immediately into my service. We called the horse Mirza, a name of good fortune. Indeed, I might say, I acquired that day a companion that contributed always to my pleasure, and more than once to my safety; and was no slender means of acquiring me the first attention of the king. I had brought my Arab stirrups, saddle, and bridle with me, so that I was now as well equipped as a horseman could be.

ON the 27th we left Hadawi, continuing our journey down a very steep and narrow path between two stony hills; then ascended one still higher, upon the top of which stands the large village of Goumbubba, whence we have a prospect over a considerable plain all sown with the different grain this country produces, wheat, barley, teff, and tocusso; sim, sim, (or sesame) and nook; the last is used for oil.

WE passed the village of Dergate, then that of Regticat, on the top of a very high hill on the left, as the other was on our right. We pitched our tent about half a mile off the village called Barranda, where we were overtaken by our friend the Baharnagash, who was so well pleased with our last interview, especially the bargain of the horse, that he sent us three goats, two jars of honey-wine, and some wheat-flour. I invited him to my tent, which he immediately accepted. He was attended by two servants on foot, with lances and shields; he had no arms himself, but, by way of amends, had two drums beating, and two trumpets blowing before him, founding a charge.

He seemed to be a very simple, good-natured man, indeed, remarkably so; a character rarely found in any degree of men in this country. He asked me how I liked my horse? said, he hoped I did not intend to mount it myself? I answered, God forbid; I kept him as a curiosity. He commended my prudence very much, and gave me a long detail about what horses had done, and would do, on occasions. Some of the people without, however, shewed his servants my saddle, bridle, and stirrups, which they well knew, from being neighbours to the Arabs of Sennaar, and praised me as a better horseman by far than any one in that country; this they told to the Baharnagash, who, nothing offended, laughed heartily at the pretended ignorance I had shewn him, and shook me very kindly by the hand, and told me he was really poor, or he would have taken no money from me for the horse. He shewed so much good nature, and open honest behaviour, that I gave him a present better than the first, and which was more agreeable, as less expected. Razors, knives, steels for striking fire, are

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the most valuable presents in this country, of the hardware-kind.

THE Baharnagash now was in such violent good spirits, that he would not go home till he had seen a good part of his jar of hydromel finished; and he little knew, at that time, he was in the tent with a man who was to be his chief customer for horses hereafter. I saw him several times after at court, and did him some services, both with the king and Ras Michael. He had a quality which I then did not know: With all his simplicity and buffoonery, no one was braver in his own person than he; and, together with his youngest son, he died afterwards in the king's defence, fighting bravely at the battle of Serbraxos.

AT five o'clock this afternoon we had a violent shower of hailstones. Nothing is more common than aggravation about the size of hail; but, stooping to take up one I thought as large as a nutmeg, I received a blow from another just under my eye, which I imagined had blinded me, and which occasioned a swelling all the next day.

I HAD gained the Baharnagash's heart so entirely that it was not possible to get away the next day. We were upon the very verge of his small dominions, and he had ordered a quantity of wheat-flour to be made for us, which he sent in the evening, with a kid. For my part, the share I had taken yesterday of his hydromel had given me such a pain in my head that I scarce could raise it the whole day.

It was the 29th we left our station at Barranda, and had scarcely advanced a mile when we were overtaken by a party

party of about twenty armed men on horseback. The Shangalla, the ancient Cushites, are all the way on our right hand, and frequently venture incursions into the flat country that was before us. This was the last piece of attention of the Baharnagash, who sent his party to guard us from danger in the plain. It awakened us from our security; we examined carefully the state of our fire-arms; cleaned and charged them anew, which we had not done since the day we left Dixan.

THE first part of our journey to-day was in a deep gully; and, in half an hour, we entered into a very pleasant wood of acacia-trees, then in flower. In it likewise was a tree, in smell like a honeysuckle, whose large white flower nearly resembles that of a caper. We came out of this wood into the plain, and ascended two easy hills; upon the top of these were two huge rocks, in the holes of which, and within a large cave, a number of the blue fork-tailed swallows had begun their nests. These, and probably many, if not all the birds of passage, breed twice in the year, which seems a provision against the losses made by emigration perfectly consonant to divine wisdom. These rocks are, by some, said to be the boundaries of the command of the Baharnagash on this side; though others extend them to the Balezat.

WE entered again a straggling wood, so overgrown with wild oats that it covered the men and their horses. The plain here is very wide. It reaches down on the west to Serawé, then distant about twelve miles. It extends from Goumbubba as far south as Balezat. The soil is excellent; but such flat countries are very rare in Abyssinia. This, which is one of the finest and widest, is abandoned without  
 . . . culture.

culture, and is in a state of waste. The reason of this is, an inveterate feud between the villages here and those of Serawé, so that the whole inhabitants on each side go armed to plow and to sow in one day; and it is very seldom either of them complete their harvest without having a battle with their enemies and neighbours.

BEFORE we entered this wood, and, indeed, on the preceding day, from the time we left Hadawi, we had seen a very extraordinary bird at a distance, resembling a wild turkey, which ran exceedingly fast, and appeared in great flocks. It is called *Erkoom* \*, in Amhara; *Abba Gumba*, in Tigrè; and, towards the frontiers of Sennaar, *Tier el Naciba*, or, the Bird of Destiny.

OUR guides assembled us all in a body, and warned us that the river before us was the place of the rendezvous of the Serawé horse, where many caravans had been entirely cut off. The cavalry is the best on this side of Abyssinia. They keep up the breed of their horses by their vicinity to Sennaar whence they get supply. Nevertheless, they behaved very ill at the battle of Limjour; and I cannot say I remember them to have distinguished themselves anywhere else. They were on our right at the battle of Scraxos, and were beat by the horse of Foggora and the Galla.

AFTER passing the wood, we came to the river, which was then standing in pools. I here, for the first time, mounted on horseback, to the great delight of my companions,

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\* See the article *Erkoom* in the Appendix.

nions from Barranda, and also of our own, none of whom had ever before seen a gun fired from a horse galloping, excepting Yafine and his servant, now my groom, but neither of these had ever seen a double-barrelled gun. We passed the plain with all the diligence consistent with the speed and capacity of our long-eared convoy; and, having now gained the hills, we bade defiance to the Serawè horse, and sent our guard back perfectly content, and full of wonder at our fire-arms, declaring that their master the Baharnagash, had he seen the black horse behave that day, would have given me another much better.

WE entered now into a close country covered with brushwood, wild oats, and high bent-grass; in many places rocky and uneven, so as scarce to leave a narrow part to pass. Just in the very entrance a lion had killed a very fine animal called Agazan. It is of the goat kind; and, excepting a small variety in colour, is precisely the same animal I had seen in Barbary near Capsa. It might be about twelve stone weight, and of the size of a large ass. (Whenever I mention a stone weight, I would wish to be understood horseman's weight, fourteen pound to the stone, as most familiar to the generality of those who read these Travels.) The animal was scarcely dead; the blood was running; and the noise of my gun had probably frightened its conqueror away: every one with their knives cut off a large portion of flesh; Moors and Christians did the same; yet the Abyssinians aversion to any thing that is dead is such, unless killed regularly by the knife, that none of them would lift any bird that was shot, unless by the point or extreme feather of its wing. Hunger was not the excuse, for they had been plentifully fed all this journey; so that the distinction, in this particular

lar case, is to be found in the manners of the country. They say they may lawfully eat what is killed by the lion, but not by the tiger, hyæna, or any other beast. Where they learned this doctrine, I believe, would not be easy to answer; but it is remarkable, even the Falasha themselves admit this distinction in favour of the lions.

At noon we crossed the river Balezat, which rises at Ade Shiho, a place on the S. W. of the province of Tigrè; and, after no very long course, having been once the boundary between Tigrè and Midré Bahar, (for so the country of the Baharnagash was called) it falls into the Mareb, or ancient Aftufaspes. It was the first river, then actually running, that we had seen since we passed Tarama; indeed, all the space is but very indifferently watered. This stream is both clear and rapid, and seems to be full of fish. We continued for some time along its banks, the river on our left, and the mountains on our right, through a narrow plain, till we came to Tomumbullo, a high pyramidal mountain, on the top of which is a convent of monks, who do not, however, reside there, but only come hither upon certain feasts, when they keep open house and entertain all that visit them. The mountain itself is of porphyry.

THERE we encamped by the river's side, and were obliged to stay this and the following day, for a duty, or custom, to be paid by all passengers. These duties are called Awides, which signifies *gifts*; though they are levied, for the most part, in a very rigorous and rude manner; but they are established by usage in particular spots; and are, in fact, a regality annexed to the estate. Such places are called Ber, *passes*; which are often met with in the names of places through-

throughout Abyssinia, as Dingleber, Sankraber; and so forth.

THERE are five of these Awides which, like turnpikes, are to be paid at passing between Masuah and Adowa; one at Samhar, the second at Dixan, the third at Darghat, the fourth here at Balezat, and the fifth at Kella. The small village of Sebow was distant from us two miles to the east; Zarow the same distance to the S. S. E. and Noguet, a village before us, were the places of abode of these tax-gatherers, who farm it for a sum from their superior, and divide the profit *pro rata* of the sums each has advanced. It is much of the same nature as the caphar in the Levant, but levied in a much more indiscreet, arbitrary manner. The farmer of this duty ~~values~~ <sup>values</sup> as he thinks proper what each caravan is to pay; there is no tariff, or restraint, upon him. Some have on this account been detained months; and others, in time of trouble or bad news, have been robbed of every thing: this is always the case upon the least resistance; for then the villages around you rise in arms; you are not only stripped of your property, but sure to be ill-treated in your person.

As I was sent for by the king, and going to Ras Michael, in whose province they were, I affected to laugh when they talked of detaining me; and declared peremptorily to them, that I would leave all my baggage to them with great pleasure, rather than that the king's life should be in danger by my stay. They were now staggered, and seemed not prepared for an incident of this kind. As I kept up a high tone, we were quit with being detained a day, by paying five pieces of blue Surat cotton cloth, value  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a pataka each,



each, and one piece of white, value one pataka. Our companions, rather than stay behind, made the best bargain they could ; and we all decamped, and set forward together. I was surprised to see, at the small village Zarow, several families as black as perfect negroes, only they were not woolly-headed, and had prominent features. I asked if they descended from slaves, or sons of slaves? They said, No; their particular families of that and the neighbouring village Sebow, were of that colour from time immemorial ; and that this did not change, though either the father or mother were of another colour.

ON the 1st of December we departed from Balezat, and ascended a steep mountain upon which stands the village Noguet, which we passed about half an hour after. On the top of the hill were a few fields of teff. Harvest was then ended, and they were treading out the teff with oxen. Having passed another very rugged mountain, we descended and encamped by the side of a small river, called Mai Kol-quall, from a number of these trees growing about it. This place is named the Kella, or Castle, because, nearly at equal distances, the mountains on each side run for a considerable extent, straight and even, in shape like a wall, with gapes at certain distances, resembling embrasures and bastions. This rock is otherwise called Damo, anciently the prison of the collateral heirs-male of the royal family.

THE river Kol-quall rises in the mountains of Tigrè, and, after a course nearly N. W. falls into the Mareb. It was at Kella we saw, for the first time, the roofs of the houses made in form of cones ; a sure proof that the tropical rains grow more violent as they proceed westward.

ABOUT half a mile on the hill above is the village Kai-bara, wholly inhabited by Mahometan Gibbertis ; that is, native Abyssinians of that religion. Kella being one of these bcers, or passages, we were detained there three whole days, by the extravagant demands of these farmers of the Awide, who laughed at all the importance we gave ourselves. They had reasons for our reasons, menaces for our menaces, but no civilities to answer ours. What increased the awkwardness of our situation was, they would take no money for provisions, but only merchandise by way of barter. We were, indeed, prepared for this by information ; so we began to open shop by spreading a cloth upon the ground, at the sight of which, hundreds of young women poured down upon us on every side from villages behind the mountains which we could not see. The country is surprisingly populous, notwithstanding the great emigration lately made with Michael. Beads and antimony are the standard in this way-faring commerce ; but beads are a dangerous speculation. You lose sometimes every thing, or gain more than honestly you should do ; for all depends upon fashion ; and the fancies of a brown, or black beauty, there, gives the *ton* as decisively as does the example of the fairest in England.

To our great disappointment, the person employed to buy our beads at Jidda had not received the last list of fashions from this country ; so he had bought us a quantity beautifully flowered with red and green, and as big as a large pea ; also some large oval, green, and yellow ones ; whereas the *ton* now among the beauties of Tigré were small sky-coloured blue beads, about the size of small lead shot, or seed pearls ; blue bugles, and common white bugles, were then in demand, and large yellow

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glafs

glafs, flat in the fides like the amber-beads formerly uſed by the better fort of the old women-peaſants in England. All our beads were then rejected, by fix or ſeven dozen of the ſhrilleſt tongues I ever heard. They decried our merchandize in ſuch a manner, that I thought they meant to condemn them as unfaleable, to be confiscated or deſtroyed.

LET every man, travelling in ſuch countries as theſe, remember, that there is no perſon, however mean, who is in his company, that does not merit attention, kindneſs, and complacency. Let no man in travelling exalt himſelf above the loweſt, in a greater degree than he is able to do ſuperior ſervice; for many that have thought themſelves ſafe, and been inattentive to this, have periſhed by the unſuſpected machinations of the loweſt and meaneſt wretch among them. Few have either made ſuch long or ſuch frequent journies of this kind as I, and I ſcarcely recollect any perſon ſo inſignificant that, before the end of a moderate journey, had not it in his power to return you like for like for your charity or unkindneſs, be the difference of your quality and condition what it would.

OF all the men in our company, none had any ſtock of the true ſmall ſky-blue beads, and no one had one grain of the large yellow-glaſs ones, but the poor Moor, whoſe aſs was bit by the hyæna near Lila, and whoſe cargo, likely to be left behind at the foot of Taranta, I had diſtributed among the reſt of the aſſes of the caravan; and, leaving the wounded one for the price he would fetch, had next day bought him another at Halai, with which, ſince that time, he continued his journey. That fellow had felt the obligation in ſilence; and not one word, but Good-day, and Good-  
c'en,

e'en, had passed between us since conferring the favour. Understanding now what was the matter, he called Yafine, and gave him a large package, which he imprudently opened, in which was a treasure of all the beads in fashion, all but the white and blue bugles, and these Yafine himself furnished us with afterwards.

A GREAT shout was set up by the women-purchasers, and a violent scramble followed. Twenty or thirty threw themselves upon the parcel, tearing and breaking all the strings as if they intended to plunder us. This joke did not seem to be relished by the servants. Their hard-heartedness before, in professing they would let us starve rather than give us a handful of ~~flour~~ for all our unfashionable beads, had quite extinguished the regard we else would have unavoidably shewn to the fair sex. A dozen of whips and sticks were laid unmercifully upon their hands and arms, till each dropped her booty. The Abyssinian men that came with them seemed to be perfectly unconcerned at the fray, and stood laughing without the least sign of wishing to interfere in favour of either side. I believe the restitution would not have been complete, had not Yafine, who knew the country well, fired one of the ship-blunderbusses into the air behind their backs. At hearing so unexpectedly this dreadful noise, both men and women fell flat on their faces; the women were immediately dragged off the cloth, and I do not believe there was strength left in any hand to grasp or carry away a single bead. My men immediately wrapped the whole in the cloth, so for a time our market ended.

FOR my part, at the first appearance of the combat I had withdrawn myself, and sat a quiet spectator under a tree.

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Some of the women were really so disordered with the fright, that they made but very feeble efforts in the market afterwards. The rest beseeched me to transfer the market to the carpet I sat on under the tree. This I consented to; but, growing wise by misfortune, my servants now produced small quantities of every thing, and not without a very sharp contest and dispute, somewhat superior in noise to that of our fish-women. We were, however, plentifully supplied with honey, butter, flour, and pumpkins of an exceeding good taste, scarcely inferior to melons.

OUR caravan being fully victualled the first and second day, our market was not opened but by private adventurers, and seemingly favoured more of gallantry than gain. There were three of them the most distinguished for beauty and for tongue, who, by their discourse, had entertained me greatly. I made each of them a present of a few beads, and asked them how many kisses they would give for each? They answered very readily, with one accord, "Poh! we don't sell kisses in this country: Who would buy them? We will give you as many as you wish for nothing." And there was no appearance but, in that bargain, they meant to be very fair and liberal dealers.

THE men seemed to have no talent for marketing; nor do they in this country either buy or sell. But we were surprised to see the beaux among them come down to the tent, the second day after our arrival, with each of them a single string of thin, white bugles tied about their dirty, black legs, a little above their ankle; and of this they seemed as proud as if the ornament had been gold or jewels.

I EASILY saw that so much poverty, joined to so much avarice and pride, made the possessor a proper subject to be employed. My young favourite, who had made so frank an offer of her kindness, had brought me her brother, begging that I would take him with me to Gondar to Ras Michael, and allow him to carry one of my guns, no doubt with an intention to run off with it by the way. I told her that was a thing easily done; but I must first have a trial of his fidelity, which was this, That he would, without speaking to anybody but me and her, go straight to Janni at Adowa, and carry the letter I should give him, and deliver it into his own hand, in which case I would give him a large parcel of each of these beads, more than ever she thought to possess in her lifetime. She frankly agreed, that my word was more to be relied upon than either her own or her brother's; and, therefore, that the beads, once shewn to them both, were to remain a deposit in my hand. However, not to send him away wholly destitute of the power of charming, I presented him the single string of white bugles for his amulet. Janni's Greek servant gave him a letter, and he made such diligence that, on the fourth day, by eight o'clock in the morning, he came to my tent without ever having been missed at home.

At the same time came an officer from Janni, with a violent mandate, in the name of Ras Michael, declaring to the person that was the cause of our detention, That, was it not for ancient friendship, the present messenger should have carried him to Ras Michael in irons; discharging me from all awides; ordering him, as Shum of the place, to furnish me with provisions; and, in regard to the time he had caused us to lose, fixing the awides of the whole caravan at

eight

eight piaſters, not the twentieth part of what he would have exacted. One reaſon of this ſeverity was, that, while I was in Maſuah, Janni had entertained this man at his own houſe; and, knowing the uſual vexations the caravans met with at Kella, and the long time they were detained there at conſiderable expence, had obtained a promiſe from the Shum, in conſideration of favours done him, that he ſhould let us paſs freely, and, not only ſo, but ſhould ſhew us ſome little civility. This promiſe, now broken, was one of the articles of delinquency for which he was puniſhed.

COHOL, large needles, goats ſkins, coarſe ſciſſars, razors, and ſteels for ſtriking fire, are the articles of barter at Kella. An ordinary goat's ſkin is worth a quart of wheat-flour. As we expected an order of deliverance, all was ready upon its arrival. The Moors with their aſſes, grateful for the benefit received, began to bleſs the moment they joined us; hoping, in my conſideration, upon our arrival at the cuſtomhouſe of Adowa, they might meet with further favour.

YASINE, in the four days we had ſtaid at Kella, had told me his whole hiſtory. It ſeems he had been ſettled in a province of Abyſſinia, near to Sennaar, called Ras el Feel; had married Abd el Jilleel, the Shekh's daughter; but, growing more popular than his father-in-law, he had been perſecuted by him, and obliged to leave the country. He began now to form hopes, that, if I was well received, as he ſaw, in all appearance, I was to be, he might, by my intereſt, be appointed to his father-in-law's place; eſpecially if there was war, as every thing ſeemed to indicate. Abd el Jilleel was a coward, and incapable of making himſelf of perſonal

valued to any party. On the contrary, Yafine was a tried man, an excellent horseman, strong, active, and of known courage, having been twice with the late king Yafous in his invasions of Sennaar, and both times much wounded there. It was impossible to dispute his title to preferment; but I had not formed that idea of my own success that I should be able to be of any use or assistance to him in it. Kella is in lat.  $14^{\circ} 24' 34''$  North.

It was in the afternoon of the 4th that we set out from Kella; our road was between two hills covered with thick wood. On our right was a cliff, or high rock of granite, on the top of which were a few houses that seemed to hang over the cliff rather than stand upon it. A few minutes after three o'clock we passed a rivulet, and a quarter of an hour afterwards another, both which run into the Mareb. We still continued to descend, surrounded on all sides with mountains covered with high grass and brushwood, and abounding with lions. At four, we arrived at the foot of the mountain, and passed a small stream which runs there.

We had seen no villages after leaving Kella. At half past four o'clock we came to a considerable river called Angueah, which we crossed, and pitched our tent on the farther side of it. It was about fifty feet broad and three in depth. It was perfectly clear, and ran rapidly over a bed of white pebbles, and was the largest river we had yet seen in Habesh. In summer there is very little plain ground near it but what is occupied by the stream; it is full of small fish, in great repute for their goodness.



THIS river has its name from a beautiful tree, which covers both its banks. This tree, by the colour of its bark and richness of its flower, is a great ornament to the banks of the river. A variety of other flowers fill the whole level plain between the mountain and the river, and even some way up the mountains. In particular, great variety of jessamin, white, yellow, and party-coloured. The country seemed now to put on a more favourable aspect; the air was much fresher, and more pleasant, every step we advanced after leaving Dixan; and one cause was very evident; the country where we now passed was well-watered with clear running streams; whereas, nearer Dixan, there were few, and all stagnant.

THE 5th, we descended a small mountain for about twenty minutes, and passed the following villages, Zabangella, about a mile N. W.; at a quarter of an hour after, Moloxito, half a mile further S. E.; and Manfuetemen, three quarters of a mile E. S. E. These villages are all the property of the Abuna; who has also a duty upon all merchandise passing there; but Ras Michael had confiscated these last villages on account of a quarrel he had with the last Abuna, *Af-Yagoubé*.

WE now began first to see the high mountains of Adowa, nothing resembling in shape to those of Europe, nor, indeed, any other country. Their sides were all perpendicular rocks, high like steeples, or obelisks, and broken into a thousand different forms.

At half past eight o'clock we left the deep valley, wherein runs the March W. N. W.; at the distance of about nine miles

above.

above it is the mountain, or high hill, on which stands Zarai, now a collection of villages, formerly two convents built by Lalibala ; though the monks tell you a story of the queen of Saba residing there, which the reader may be perfectly satisfied she never did in her life.

THE Mareb is the boundary between Tigré and the Baharnagash, on this side. It runs over a bed of soil ; is large, deep, and smooth ; but, upon rain falling, it is more dangerous to pass than any river in Abyssinia, on account of the frequent holes in its bottom. We then entered the narrow plain of Yeeha, wherein runs the small river, which either gives its name to, or takes it from it. The Yeeha rises from many sources in the mountains to the west ; it is neither considerable for size nor its course, and is swallowed up in the Mareb.

THE harvest was in great forwardness in this place. The wheat was cut, and a considerable share of the teff in another part ; they were treading out this last-mentioned grain with oxen. The Dora, and a small grain called telba, (of which they make oil) was not ripe.

At eleven o'clock we rested by the side of the mountain whence the river falls. All the villages that had been built here bore the marks of the justice of the governor of Tigré. They had been long the most incorrigible banditti in the province. He surrounded them in one night, burnt their houses, and extirpated the inhabitants ; and would never suffer any one since to settle there. At three o'clock in the afternoon we ascended what remained of the mountain of Yeeha ; came to the plain upon its top ; and, at a quarter be-

fore four, passed the village of that name, leaving it to the S. E. and began the most rugged and dangerous descent we had met with since Taranta.

At half past five in the evening we pitched our tent at the foot of the hill, close by a small, but rapid and clear stream, which is called Ribieraini. This name was given it by the banditti of the villages before mentioned, because from this you see two roads; one leading from Gondar, that is, from the westward; the other from the Red Sea to the eastward. One of the gang that used to be upon the outlook from this station, as soon as any caravan came in sight, cried out, Ribieraini, which in Tigrè signifies *they are coming this way*; upon which notice every one took his lance and shield, and stationed himself properly to fall with advantage upon the unwary merchant; and it was a current report, which his present greatness could not stifle, that, in his younger days, Ras Michael himself frequently was on these expeditions at this place. On our right was the high, steep, and rugged mountain of Samayat, which the same Michael, being in rebellion, chose for his place of strength, and was there besieged and taken prisoner by the late king Yafous.

THE rivulet of Ribieraini is the source of the fertility of the country adjoining, as it is made to overflow every part of this plain, and furnishes a perpetual store of grass, which is the reason of the caravans chusing to stop here. Two or three harvests are also obtained by means of this river; for, provided there is water, they sow in Abyssinia in all seasons. We perceived that we were now approaching some considerable town, by the great care with which every piece of small ground,

ground, and even the steep sides of the mountains, were cultivated, though they had ever so little soil.

ON Wednesday the 6th of December, at eight o'clock in the morning, we set out from Ribieraini; and in about three hours travelling on a very pleasant road, over easy hills and through hedge-rows of jessamin, honey-suckle, and many kinds of flowering shrubs we arrived at Adowa, where once resided Michael Suhul, governor of Tigrè. It was this day we saw, for the first time, the small, long-tailed green parouet, from the hill of Shillodee, where, as I have already mentioned, we first came in sight of the mountains of Adowa.





## CHAP. V.

*Arrive at Adowa—Reception there—Visit Fremona and Ruins of Axum—  
Arrive at Siré.*

**A**DOWA is situated on the declivity of a hill, on the west side of a small plain surrounded everywhere by mountains. Its situation accounts for its name, which signifies *pass*, or *passage*, being placed on the flat ground immediately below Ribieraini; the pass through which every body must go in their way from Gondar to the Red Sea.

THIS plain is watered by three rivulets which are never dry in the midst of summer; the Alfa, which we cross just below the town when coming from the eastward; the Mai Gogua, which runs below the hill whereon stands the village of the same name formerly, though now it is called Fremona, from the monastery of the Jesuits built there; and the Ribieraini, which, joining with the other two, falls into the river Mareb, about 22 miles below Adowa. There are fish in these three streams, but none of them remarkable for

for their size, quantity, or goodness. The best are those of Mai Gogua, a clear and pleasant rivulet, running very violently and with great noise. This circumstance, and ignorance of the language, has misled the reverend father Jerome, who says, that the water of Mai Gogua is called so from the noise that it makes, which, in common language, is called *guggling*. This is a mistake, for Mai Gogua signifies *the river of owls*.

THERE are many agreeable spots to the south-east of the convent, on the banks of this river, which are thick-shaded with wood and bushes. Adowa consists of about 300 houses, and occupies a much larger space than would be thought necessary for these to stand on, by reason that each house has an inclosure round it of hedges and trees; the last chiefly the wanzey. The number of these trees so planted in all the towns, screen them so, that, at a distance, they appear so many woods. Adowa was not formerly the capital of Tigré, but has accidentally become so upon the accession of this governor; whose property, or paternal estate, lay in and about it. His mansion-house is not distinguished from any of the others in the town unless by its size; it is situated upon the top of the hill. The person who is Michael's deputy, in his absence, lives in it. It resembles a prison rather than a palace; for there are in and about it above three hundred persons in irons, some of whom have been there for twenty years, mostly with a view to extort money from them; and, what is the most unhappy, even when they have paid the sum of money which he asks, do not get their deliverance from his merciless hands; most of them are kept in cages like wild beasts, and treated every way in the same manner.

He conducted us through a court yard planted with jessamin, to a very neat, and, at the same time, large room, furnished with a silk sofa; the floor was covered with Persian carpets and cushions. All round, flowers and green leaves were strewed upon the outer yard; and the windows and sides of the room stuck full of evergreens, in commemoration of the Christmas festival that was at hand. I stooped at the entrance of this room; my feet were both dirty and bloody; and it is not good-breeding to show or speak of your feet in Abyssinia, especially if any thing ails them,

and, at all times, they are covered. He immediately perceived the wounds that were upon mine. Both our cloaths and flesh were torn to pieces at Taranta, and several other places ; but he thought we had come on mules furnished us by the Naybe. For the young man I had sent to him from Kella, following the genius of his countrymen, tho' telling truth was just as profitable to him as lying, had chosen the latter, and seeing the horse I had got from the Baharna-gash, had figured in his own imagination, a multitude of others, and told Janni that there were with me horses, asses, and mules in great plenty ; so that when Janni saw us passing the water, he took me for a servant, and expected, for several minutes, to see the splendid company arrive, well mounted upon horses and mules caparisoned.

He was so shocked at my saying that I performed this terrible journey on foot, that he burst into tears, uttering a thousand reproaches against the Naybe for his hard heartedness and ingratitude, as he had twice, as he said, hindered Michael from going in person and sweeping the Naybe from the face of the earth. Water was immediately procured to wash our feet. And here began another contention, Janni insisted upon doing this himself ; which made me run out into the yard, and declare I would not suffer it. After this, the like dispute took place among the servants. It was always a ceremony in Abyssinia, to wash the feet of those that come from Cairo, and who are understood to have been pilgrims at Jerusalem.

\* THIS was no sooner finished, than a great dinner was brought, exceedingly well dressed. But no consideration or intreaty could prevail upon my kind landlord to sit down



and partake with me. He would stand, all the time, with a clean towel in his hand, though he had plenty of servants; and afterwards dined with some visitors, who had come out of curiosity, to see a man arrived from so far. Among these was a number of priests; a part of the company which I liked least, but who did not shew any hostile appearance. It was long before I cured my kind landlord of these respectful observances, which troubled me very much; nor could he wholly ever get rid of them, his own kindness and good heart, as well as the pointed and particular orders of the Greek patriarch, Mark, constantly suggesting the same attention.

In the afternoon, I had a visit from the governor, a very graceful man, of about sixty years of age, tall and well favoured. He had just then returned from an expedition to the Tacazzè, against some villages of Ayto Tesfos \*, which he had destroyed, slain 120 men, and driven off a number of cattle. He had with him about sixty musquets, to which, I understood, he had owed his advantage. These villages were about Tubalague, just as you ascend the farther bank of the Tacazzè. He said he doubted much if we should be allowed to pass through Woggora, unless some favourable news came from Michael; for Tesfos of Samen, who kept his government after Joas's death, and refused to acknowledge Michael, or to submit to the king, in conjunction with the people of Woggora, acted now the part of robbers, plundering all sorts of people, that carried either provisions,

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\* A rebel governor of Samen, of which I shall after have occasion to speak.

or any thing else, to Gondar, in order to distress the king and Michael's Tigré soldiers, who were then there.

THE church of Mariam is on the hill S. S. W. of the town, and east of Adowa; on the other side of the river, is the other church, called Kedus Michael. About nine miles north, a little inclined to the east, is Bet Abba Garima, one of the most celebrated monasteries in Abyssinia. It was once a residence of one of their kings; and it is supposed that, from this circumstance ill understood, former travellers \*, have said the metropolis of Abyssinia was called Germè.

ADOWA is the seat of a very valuable manufacture of coarse cotton cloth, which circulates all over Abyssinia instead of silver money; each web is sixteen peck long of 1½ width, their value a pataka; that is, ten for the ounce of gold. The houses of Adowa are all of rough stone, cemented with mud instead of mortar. That of lime is not used but at Gondar, where it is very bad. The roofs are in the form of cones, and thatched with a reedy sort of grass, something thicker than wheat straw. The Falasha, or Jews, enjoy this profession of thatching exclusively; they begin at the bottom, and finish at the top.

EXCEPTING a few spots taken notice of as we came along from Ribieraini to Adowa, this was the only part of Tigré where there was soil sufficient to yield corn; the whole of the province besides is one entire rock. There are no timber trees in this part of Tigré unless a daroo or two in the valleys, and wanzeys in towns about the houses.

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\* Col. p. 22. procem.

AT Adowa, and all the neighbourhood, they have three harvests annually. Their first seed time is in July and August; it is the principal one for wheat, which they then sow in the middle of the rains. In the same season they sow tocusso, teff, and barley. From the 20th of November they reap first their barley, then their wheat, and last of all their teff. In room of these they sow immediately upon the same ground, without any manure, barley, which they reap in February; and then often sow teff, but more frequently a kind of veitch, or pea, called Shimbra; these are cut down before the first rains, which are in April. With all these advantages of triple harvests, which cost no fallowing, weeding, manure, or other expensive processes, the farmer in Abyssinia is always poor and miserable.

IN Tigré it is a good harvest that produces nine after one, it scarcely ever is known to produce ten; or more than three after one, for peas. The land, as in Egypt, is set to the highest bidder yearly; and like Egypt it receives an additional value, depending on the quantity of rain that falls and its situation more or less favourable for leading water to it. The landlord furnishes the seed under condition to receive half the produce; but I am told he is a very indulgent master that does not take another quarter for the risk he has run; so that the quantity that comes to the share of the husbandman is not more than sufficient to afford sustenance for his wretched family.

THE soil is white clay, mixed with sand, and has as good appearance as any I have seen. I apprehend a deficiency of the crop is not from the barrenness of the soil, but from the immense quantity of field-rats and mice that over-run the

the whole country, and live in the fissures of the earth. To kill these, they set fire to their straw, the only use they make of it.

THE cattle roam at discretion through the mountains. The herdsmen set fire to the grass, bent, and brushwood, before the rains, and an amazing verdure immediately follows. As the mountains are very steep and broken, goats are chiefly the flocks that graze upon them.

THE province of Tigré is all mountainous; and it has been said, without any foundation in truth, that the Pyrenees, Alps, and Apennines, are but mole-hills compared to them. I believe, however, that one of the Pyrenees above St John Pied de Port, is much higher than Lamalmon; and that the mountain of St Bernard, one of the Alps, is full as high as Taranta, or rather higher. It is not the extreme height of the mountains in Abyssinia that occasions surprise, but the number of them, and the extraordinary forms they present to the eye. Some of them are flat, thin, and square, in shape of a hearth-stone, or slab, that scarce would seem to have base sufficient to resist the action of the winds. Some are like pyramids, others like obelisks or prisms, and some, the most extraordinary of all the rest, pyramids pitched upon their points, with their base uppermost, which, if it was possible, as it is not, they could have been so formed in the beginning, would be strong objections to our received ideas of gravity.

THEY tan hides to great perfection in Tigré, but for one purpose only. They take off the hair with the juice of two plants, a species of solanum, and the juice of the kol-quall; v. iii. q. both

both these are produced in abundance in the province. They are great novices, however, in dyeing; the plant called *Suf* produces the only colour they have, which is yellow. In order to obtain a blue, to weave as a border to their cotton clothes, they unravel the blue threads of the *Marowt*, or blue cloth of *Surat*, and then weave them again with the thread which they have dyed with the *suf*.

It was on the 10th of January 1770 I visited the remains of the Jesuits convent of *Fremonā*. It is built upon the even ridge of a very high hill, in the middle of a large plain, on the opposite side of which stands *Adowa*. It rises from the east to the west, and ends in a precipice on the east; it is also very steep to the north, and slopes gently down to the plain on the south. The convent is about a mile in circumference, built substantially with stones, which are cemented with lime-mortar. It has towers in the flanks and angles; and, notwithstanding the ill-usage it has suffered, the walls remain still entire to the height of twenty-five feet. It is divided into three, by cross walls of equal height. The first division seems to have been destined for the convent, the middle for the church, and the third division is separated from this by a wall, and stands upon a precipice. It seems to me as if it was designed for a place of arms. All the walls have holes for muskets, and, even now, it is by far the most defensible place in *Abyssinia*. It resembles an ancient castle much more than a convent.

I CAN scarce conceive the reason why these reverend fathers misrepresent and misplace this intended capital of Catholic *Abyssinia*. *Jerome Lobo* calls this convent a collection of miserable villages. Others place it fifty miles, when it is but

but two, from Adowa to the north-east. Others say it is only five miles from the Red Sea, while it is an hundred. It is very extraordinary, that these errors should occur in the situation of a place built by their own hands, and where their body long had its residence; and, what makes it more extraordinary still, it was the domicil which they first occupied, and quitted last.

THE kindness, hospitality, and fatherly care of Janni never ceased a moment. He had already represented me in the most favourable light to the Iteghè, or queen-mother, (whose servant he had long been) to her daughter Ozoro Esther, and Ozoro Alash; and, above all, to Michael, with whom his influence was very great; and, indeed, to every body he had any weight with; his own countrymen, Greeks, Abyssinians, and Mahometans; and, as we found afterwards, he had raised their curiosity to a great pitch.

A KIND of calm had spread itself universally over the country, without apparent reason, as it has been in general observed to do immediately before a storm. The minds of men had been wearied rather than amused, by a constant series of new things, none of which had been foreseen, and which generally ended in a manner little expected. Tired of guessing, all parties seemed to agree to give it over, till the success of the campaign should afford them surer grounds to go upon. Nobody loved Michael, but nobody neglected their own safety so much as to do or say any thing against him, till he either should lose or establish his good fortune, by the gain or loss of a battle with Fasil.

THIS calm I resolved to take advantage of, and to set out immediately for Gondar. But the 17th of January was now at hand, on which the Abyssinians celebrate the feast of the Epiphany with extraordinary rejoicings, and as extraordinary ceremonies, if we believe what their enemies have said about their yearly repetition of baptism. This I was resolved to verify with my own eyes; and as Alvarez, chaplain to the embassy from Don Emanuel, king of Portugal, to king David III. says he was likewise present at it, the public will judge between two eye-witnesses which is likeliest to be true, when I come to give an account of the religious rites of this people. Adowa is in lat.  $14^{\circ} 7' 57''$  north.

ON the 17th, we set out from Adowa, resuming our journey to Gondar; and, after passing two small villages Adega Net, and Adega Daid, the first about half a mile on our left, the second about three miles distant on our right, we decamped at sun set near a place called Bet Hannes, in a narrow valley, at the foot of two hills, by the side of a small stream.

ON the 8th, in the morning, we ascended one of these hills, through a very rough stony road, and again came into the plain, wherein stood Axum, once the capital of Abyssinia, at least as it is supposed. For my part, I believe it to have been the magnificent metropolis of the trading people, or Troglodyte Ethiopians called properly Cushites, for the reason I have already given, as the Abyssinians never built any city, nor do the ruins of any exist at this day in the whole country. But the black, or Troglodyte part of it, called in the language of scripture Cush, in many places

have buildings of great strength, magnitude, and expence, especially at Azab, worthy the magnificence and riches of a state, which was from the first ages the emporium of the Indian and African trade, whose sovereign, though a Pagan, was thought an example of reproof to the nations, and chosen as an instrument to contribute materially to the building of the first temple which man erected to the true God.

THE ruins of Axum are very extensive; but, like the cities of ancient times, consist altogether of public buildings. In one square, which I apprehend to have been the center of the town, there are forty obelisks, none of which have any hieroglyphics upon them\*. There is one larger than the rest still standing, but there are two still larger than this fallen. They are all of one piece of granite; and on the top of that which is standing there is a patera exceedingly well carved in the Greek taste. Below, there is the door-bolt and lock, which Poncet speaks of, carved on the obelisk, as if to represent an entrance through it to some building behind. The lock and bolt are precisely the same as those used at this day in Egypt and Palestine, but were never seen, as far as I know, in Ethiopia, or at any time in use there.

I APPREHEND this obelisk, and the two larger that are fallen, to be the works of Ptolemy Evergetes. There is a great deal of carving upon the face of the obelisk in a Gothic

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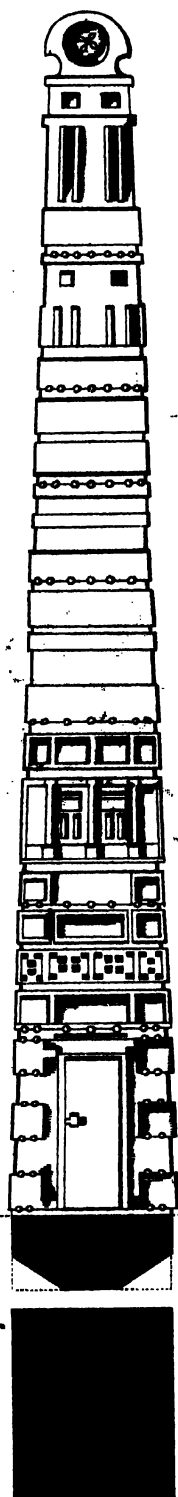
\* Poncet says that these obelisks are covered with hieroglyphics; but in this he is wrong; he has mistaken the carving, I shall directly mention, for hieroglyphics. London edit. 12mo. 1709, p. 106.



thic taste, something like metopes, triglyphs, and guttae; disposed rudely, and without order, but there are no characters or figures. The face of this pyramid looks due south; has been placed with great exactness, and preserves its perpendicular position till this day. As this obelisk has been otherwise described as to its ornaments, I have given a geometrical elevation of it servilely copied, without shading or perspective, that all kind of readers may understand it.

AFTER passing the convent of Abba Pantaleon, called in Abyssinia, Mantilles, and the small obelisk situated on a rock above, we proceed south by a road cut in a mountain of red marble, having on the left a parapet-wall about five feet high, solid, and of the same materials. At equal distances there are hewn in this wall solid pedestals, upon the tops of which we see the marks where stood the Colossal statues of Syrius the Latrator Anubis, or Dog Star. One hundred and thirty-three of these pedestals, with the marks of the statues I just mentioned, are still in their places; but only two figures of the dog remained when I was there, much mutilated, but of a taste easily distinguished to be Egyptian. These are composed of granite, but some of them appear to have been of metal. Axum, being the capital of Siris, or Sirè, from this we easily see what connection this capital of the province had with the dog-star, and consequently the absurdity of supposing that the river derived its name from a Hebrew word\*, signifying *black*.

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THERE are likewise pedestals, whereon the figures of the Sphinx have been placed. Two magnificent flights of steps, several hundred feet long, all of granite, exceedingly well-fashioned, and still in their places, are the only remains of a magnificent temple. In the angle of this platform where that temple stood, is the present small church of Axum, in the place of a former one destroyed by Mahomet Gragné, in the reign of king David III.; and which was probably remains of a temple built by Ptolemy Evergetes, if not the work of times more remote.

THE church is a mean, small building, very ill kept, and full of pigeons dung. In it are supposed to be preserved the ark of the covenant, and copy of the law which Menilek son of Solomon is said, in their fabulous legends, to have stolen from his father Solomon in his return to Ethiopia, and these were reckoned as it were the palladia of this country. Some ancient copy of the Old Testament, I do believe, was deposited here, probably that from which the first version was made. But whatever this might be, it was destroyed, with the church itself, by Mahomet Gragné, though pretended falsely to subsist there still. This I had from the king himself.

THERE was another relique of great importance that happened to escape from being burnt, by having, in time, been transferred to a church in one of the islands in the lake Tzana, called Selé Quarat Rasou. It is a picture of Christ's head crowned with thorns, said to be painted by St Luke, which, upon occasions of the utmost importance, is brought out and carried with the army, especially in a war with Mahometans and Pagans. We have just seen, it was taken,

upon Yafous's defeat at Sennaar, and restored afterwards upon an embassy sent thither on purpose, no doubt, for a valuable consideration.

WITHIN the outer gate of the church, below the steps, are three small square inclosures, all of granite, with small octagon pillars in the angles, apparently Egyptian; on the top of which formerly were small images of the dog-star, probably of metal. Upon a stone, in the middle of one of these, the king sits, and is crowned, and always has been since the days of Paganism; and below it, where he naturally places his feet, is a large oblong slab like a hearth, which is not of granite, but of free stone. The inscription, though much defaced, may safely be restored.

ΗΤΟΑΕΜΑΙΟΤ ΕΒΕΡΓΕΤΟΤ  
ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ

PONCET has mistaken this last word for Basilius; but he did not pretend to be a scholar, and was ignorant of the history of this country.

AXUM is watered by a small stream, which flows all the year from a fountain in the narrow valley, where stand the rows of obelisks. The spring is received into a magnificent basin of 150 feet square, and thence it is carried, at pleasure, to water the neighbouring gardens, where there is little fruit, excepting pomegranates, neither are these very excellent.

THE present town of Axum stands at the foot of the hill, and may have about six hundred houses. There are several manufactures.

manufactures of coarse cotton cloth ; and here too the best parchment is made of goats skins, which is the ordinary employment of the monks. Every thing seemed later at Axum, and near it, than at Adowa ; the teff was standing yet green.

On the 19th of January, by a meridian altitude of the sun, and a mean of several altitudes of stars by night, I found the latitude of Axum to be  $14^{\circ} 6' 36''$  north.

THE reader will have observed, that I have taken great pains in correcting the geography of this country, and illustrating the accounts given us by travellers, as well ancient as modern, and reconciling them to each other. There are, however, in a very late publication, what I must suppose to be errors, at least they are absolutely unintelligible to me, whether they are to be placed to the account of Jerome Lobo, the original, or to Dr Johnson the translator, or to the bookseller, is what I am not able to say. But as the book itself is ushered in by a very warm and particular recommendation of so celebrated an author as Dr Johnson, and as I have in the course of this work spoke very contemptibly of that Jesuit, I must, in my own vindication, make some observations upon the geography of this book, which, introduced into the world by such authority, might else bring the little we know of this part of Africa into confusion, from which its maps are as yet very far from being cleared.

CAXUME \* is said to mean Axum, to be a city in Africa, capital of the kingdom of Tigrè Mahon in Abyssinia. Now,  
long

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\* See Johnson's translation of Jerome Lobo, p. 29.

long ago, Mr Ludolf had shewn, from the testimony of Gregory the Abyssinian, that there was no such place in Abyssinia as Tigrè Mahon. That there was, indeed, a large province called Tigrè, of which Axum was the capital ; and Le Grande, the first publisher of Jerome Lobo, has repeatedly said the same. And Ludolf has given a very probable conjecture, that the first Portuguese, ignorant of the Abyssinian language, heard the officer commanding that province called Tigrè Mocuonen, which is governor of Tigré, and had mistaken the name of his office for that of his province. Be that as it will, the reader may rest assured there is no such kingdom, province, or town in all Abyssinia.

THERE still remains, however, a difficulty much greater than this, and an error much more difficult to be corrected. Lobo is said to have sailed from the peninsula of India, and, being bound for Zeyla, to have embarked in a vessel going to Caxume, or Axum, capital of Tigrè, and to have arrived there safely, and been well accommodated. Now Zeyla, he says, is a city in the kingdom of Adel, at the mouth of the Red Sea \* ; and Axum, being two hundred miles inland, in the middle of the kingdom of Tigrè, a ship going to Axum must have passed Zeyla 300 miles, or been 300 miles to the westward of it. Zeyla is not a city, as is said, but an island. It is not in the kingdom of Adel, but in the bay of Tajoura, opposite to a kingdom of that name ; but the island itself belongs to the Imam of Sana, sovereign of Arabia Felix ; so that it is inexplicable, how a ship going to Zeyla should choose to land 300 miles beyond it ; and still more so, how, being once arrived

arrived at Axum, they should seek a ship to carry them back again to Zeyla, 300 miles eastward, when they were then going to Gondar, not much above a hundred miles west of Axum. This seems to me absolutely impossible to explain.

STILL, however, another difficulty remains; Tigré is said, by the Jesuits, and by M. Le Grande their historian, to be full of mountains, so high that the Alps and Appenines were very inconsiderable in comparison. And suppose it was otherwise, there is no navigable river, indeed no river at all, that runs through Tigré into the Red Sea, and there is the desert of Samhar to pass, where there is no water at all. How is it possible a ship from the coast of Malabar should get up 200 miles from any sea among the mountains of Tigré? I hope the publisher will compare this with any map he pleases, and correct it in his *errata*, otherwise his narrative is unintelligible, unless all this was intended to be placed to the account of miracles—Peter walked upon the water, and Lobo the Jesuit failed upon dry land.

Dr JOHNSON, or his publisher, involves his reader in another strange perplexity. "Dancala is a city of Africa in Upper Ethiopia, upon the Nile, in the tract of Nubia, of which it is the capital;" and the emperor wrote, "that the missionaries might easily enter his dominions by the way of Dancala\*." It is very difficult to understand how people, in a ship from India, could enter Abyssinia by the way of Dancala, if that city is upon the Nile; because no where, that I

- v. iii. r • know,



know, is that river in Abyſſinia within 300 miles of any ſea; and, ſtill more ſo, how it could be in Nubia, and yet in Upper Ethiopia. Dongola is, indeed, the capital of Nubia; it is upon the Nile in  $20^{\circ}$  north latitude; but then it cannot be in Upper Ethiopia, but certainly in the Lower, and is not within a hundred miles of the Red Sea, and certainly not the way for a ſhip from India to get to Abyſſinia, which, ſailing down the Red Sea, it muſt have paſſed ſeveral hundred miles, and gone to the northward: Dongola, beſides, is in the heart of the great deſert of Beja, and cannot, with any degree of propriety, be ſaid to be eaſily acceſſible to any, no, not even upon camels, but impoſſible to ſhipping, as it is not within 200 miles of any ſea. On the other hand, Dancali, for which it may have been miſtaken, is a ſmall kingdom on the coaſt of the Red Sea, reaching to the frontiers of Abyſſinia; and through it the patriarch Mendes entered Abyſſinia, as has been ſaid in my hiſtory; but then Dancali is in lat.  $12^{\circ}$ , it is not in Nubia, nor upon the Nile, nor within ſeveral hundred miles of it.

AGAIN, Lobo has ſaid, (p. 30. 31.) “that a Portuguese galliot was ordered to ſet him aſhore at Paté, whoſe inhabitants were man-eaters.” This is a very whimſical choice of a place to land ſtrangers in, among man-eaters. I cannot conceive what advantage could be propoſed by landing men going to Abyſſinia ſo far to the ſouthward, among a people ſuch as this, who certainly, by their very manners, muſt be at war, and unconnected with all their neighbours. And many ages have paſſed without this reproach having fallen upon the inhabitants of the eaſt coaſt of the peninsula of Africa from any authentic teſtimony; and I am confident, after the few ſpecimens juſt given of the topographical knowledge of this

author, his present testimony will not weigh much, from whatever hand this performance may have come.

M. DE MONTESQUIEU, among all his other talents a most excellent and accurate geographer, observes, that man-eaters were first mentioned when the southern parts of the east coast of the peninsula of Africa came to be unknown. Travellers of Jerome Lobo's cast, delighting in the marvellous, did place these unfociable people beyond the promontory of Prassum, because nobody, at that time, did pass the promontory of Prassum.

ABOVE 1200 years, these people were unknown, till Vasques de Gama discovered their coast, and called them the civil or kind nation. By some lucky revolution in that long period, when they were left to themselves, they seem most unaccountably to have changed both their diet and their manners. The Portuguese conquered them, built towns among them, and, if they met with conspiracies and treachery, these all originated in a mixture of Moors from Spain and Portugal, Europeans that had settled among them, and not among the natives themselves. No man-eaters appeared till after the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope, when that of the new world, which followed it, made the Portuguese abandon their settlements in the old ; and this coast came as unknown to them as it had been to the Romans, when they traded only to Raptum and Prassum, and made Anthropophagi of all the rest. One would be almost tempted to believe that Jerome Lobo was a man-eater himself, and had taught this custom to these savages. They had it not before his coming ; they have never had it since ; and it must have been with some sinister intention like this, that a stranger would vo-

luntarily seek a nation of man-eaters. It is nonsense to say, that a traveller could propose, as Lobo did, going into a far distant country, such as Abyssinia, under so very questionable a protection as a man-eater.

I WILL not take up my own, or the reader's time, in going through the multitude of errors in geography to be found in this book of Lobo's; I have given the reader my opinion of the author from the original, before I saw the translation. I said it was a heap of fables, and full of ignorance and presumption; and I confess myself disappointed that it has come from so celebrated a hand as the translator, so very little amended, if indeed it can be said to be amended at all.

DR JOHNSON, in the preface to the book, expresses himself in these words:—"The Portuguese traveller (Jerome Lobo, his original) has amused his reader with no romantic absurdities, or incredible fictions. He seems to have described things as he saw them; to have copied nature from the life; and to have consulted his senses, not his imagination. He meets with no basilisks that destroy with their eyes; and his cataracts fall from the rock, without deafening the neighbouring inhabitants."

At first reading this passage, I confess I thought it irony. As to what regards the cataract, one of the articles Dr Johnson has condescended upon as truth, I had already spoken, while composing these memoirs in Abyssinia, long before this new publication saw the light; and, upon a cool revival of the whole that I have said, I cannot think of receding from any part of it, and therefore recommend it to the reader's

reader's perusal. What we have now only to note, is the fidelity of Jerome Lobo, so strongly vouched in the words I have just cited, in the article of basilisks, or serpents, which Dr Johnson has chosen as one of the instances of his author's adhering to fact, contrary to the custom of other writers on such subjects.

"IN crossing a desert, which was two days journey over, "I was in great danger of my life; for, as I lay on the "ground, I perceived myself seized with a pain which forced me to rise, and saw, about four yards from me, one of "those serpents that *dart their poison from a distance*. Although "I rose before he came very near me, I yet felt the effects of "his poisonous breath; and, if I had lain a little longer, "had certainly died. I had recourse to bezoar, a sovereign "remedy against those poisons, which I always carried "about me. These serpents are not long, but have a body "short and thick, their bellies speckled with brown, black, "and yellow. They have a wide mouth, with which they "draw in a great quantity of air, and, having retained it "some time, eject it with such force, that they kill at four "yards distance. I only escaped by being somewhat farther "from him." (Chap. xii. p. 124.)

Now, as this is warranted, by one of such authority as Dr Johnson, to be neither imagination nor falsehood, we must think it a new system of natural philosophy, and consider it as such; and, in the first place, I would wish to know from the author, who seems perfectly informed, what species of serpent it is that he has quoted as darting their poison at a distance. Again, what species it is that, at the distance of 12 feet, kills a man by breathing on his back;

also, what they call that species of serpent that, drawing in the same outward air which Jerome Lobo breathed, could so far pervert its quality as with it to kill at the distance of four yards. Surely such a serpent, if he had no other characteristic in the world, would be described by a naturalist as the serpent with the foul stomach.—I never saw a poisonous serpent in Abyssinia whose belly is not white; so this one being speckled, brown, black, and yellow, will be a direction when any such is found, and serve as a warning not to come near him, at least within the distance of four yards.

JEROME LOBO continues, “that this danger was not to be much regarded in comparison of another his negligence brought him into. As he was picking up a skin that lay upon the ground, he was stung by a serpent that left its sting in his finger; he picked out an extraneous substance about the bigness of an hair, which he imagined was the sting. This slight wound he took little notice of, till his arm grew inflamed all over; his blood was infected; he fell into convulsions, which were interpreted as the signs of inevitable death.” (Chap. xii. p. 125.)

Now, with all submission to Jerome Lobo, the first serpent had brought him within a near view of death; the second did no more, for it did not kill him; how comes it that he says the first danger was nothing in comparison to the second? The first would have certainly killed him, by blowing upon his back, if he had been nearer than 12 feet. The other had nearly killed him by a sting. Death was the end of them both. I cannot see the difference between the two dangers.

THE first serpent was of a new species, that kills a man at the distance of 12 feet by breathing upon him. The second was also new, for he killed by a sting. We know of no such power that any of the serpent kind have. If Dr Johnson believes this, I will not say that it is the most improbable thing he ever gave credit to, but this I will say, that it is altogether different from what at this day is taught us by natural philosophy. We easily see, by the strain in which these stories are told, that all these fables of Lobo would have passed for miracles, had the conversion of Abyssinia followed. They were preparatory steps for receiving him as confessor, had his merit not been sufficient to have entitled him to a higher place in the kalendar. Rainy, miry, and cold countries, are not the favourite habitation of serpents. Abyssinia is deluged with six months rain every year while the sun is passing over it. It only enjoys clear weather when the sun is farthest distant from it in the southern hemisphere; the days and nights are always nearly equal. Vipers are not found in a climate like this. Accordingly, I can testify, I never saw one of the kind in the high country of Abyssinia all the time I lived there; and Tigré, where Jerome Lobo places the scene of his adventures, by being one of the highest provinces in the country, is surely not one of the most proper.

It was the 20th of January, at seven o'clock in the morning, we left Axum; our road was at first sufficiently even, through small vallies and meadows; we began to ascend gently, but through a road exceedingly difficult in itself, by reason of large stones standing on edge, or heaped one upon another; apparently the remains of an old large causeway, part of the magnificent works about Axum,

THE last part of the journey made ample amends for the difficulties and fatigue we had suffered in the beginning. For our road, on every side, was perfumed with variety of flowering shrubs, chiefly different species of jessamin; one in particular of these called Agam (a small four-leaved flower) impregnated the whole air with the most delicious odour, and covered the small hills through which we passed, in such profusion, that we were, at times, almost overcome with its fragrance. The country all round had now the most beautiful appearance, and this was heightened by the finest of weather, and a temperature of air neither too hot nor too cold.

Not long after our losing sight of the ruins of this ancient capital of Abyssinia, we overtook three travellers driving a cow before them; they had black goat skins upon their shoulders, and lances and shields in their hands, in other respects were but thinly clothed; they appeared to be soldiers. The cow did not seem to be fattened for killing, and it occurred to us all that it had been stolen. This, however, was not our business, nor was such an occurrence at all remarkable in a country so long engaged in war. We saw that our attendants attached themselves in a particular manner to the three soldiers that were driving the cow, and held a short conversation with them. Soon after, we arrived at the hithermost bank of the river, where I thought we were to pitch our tent. The drivers suddenly tript up the cow, and gave the poor animal a very rude fall upon the ground, which was but the beginning of her sufferings. One of them sat across her neck, holding down her head by the horns, the other twisted the halter about her forefeet, while the third, who had a knife in his hand, to my very great surprise, in place of taking her by the throat got a-  
stride

stride upon her belly before her hind-legs, and gave her a very deep wound in the upper part of her buttock.

FROM the time I had seen them throw the beast upon the ground, I had rejoiced, thinking, that when three people were killing a cow, they must have agreed to sell part of her to us; and I was much disappointed upon hearing the Abyssinians say, that we were to pass the river to the other side, and not encamp where I intended. Upon my proposing they should bargain for part of the cow, my men answered what they had already learned in conversation, that they were not then to kill her, that she was not wholly theirs, and they could not sell her. This awakened my curiosity; I let my people go forward, and staid myself, till I saw, with the utmost astonishment, two pieces, thicker, and longer than our ordinary beef steaks, cut out of the higher part of the buttock of the beast. How it was done I cannot positively say, because judging the cow was to be killed from the moment I saw the knife drawn, I was not anxious to view that catastrophe, which was by no means an object of curiosity; whatever way it was done, it surely was adroitly, and the two pieces were spread upon the outside of one of their shields.

ONE of them still continued holding the head, while the other two were busied in curing the wound. This too was done not in an ordinary manner; the skin which had covered the flesh that was taken away was left entire, and flapped over the wound, and was fastened to the corresponding part by two or more small skewers, or pins. Whether they had put any thing under the skin between that and the wounded flesh I know not, but at the river side where they were, they had prepared a cataplasm of clay, with which they covered the wound:



wound ; they then forced the animal to rise, and drove it on before them, to furnish them with a fuller meal when they should meet their companions in the evening.

I COULD not but admire a dinner so truly foldier-like, nor did I ever see so commodious a manner of carrying provisions along on the road as this was. I naturally attributed this to necessity, and the love of expedition. It was a liberty, to be sure, taken with Christianity; but what transgression is not warranted to a soldier when distressed by his enemy in the field? I could not as yet conceive that this was the ordinary banquet of citizens, and even of priests, throughout all this country. In the hospitable, humane house of Janni, these living feasts had never appeared. It is true we had seen raw meat, but no part of an animal torn from it with the blood. The first shocked us as uncommon, but the other as impious.

WHEN first I mentioned this in England, as one of the singularities which prevailed in this barbarous country, I was told by my friends it was not believed. I asked the reason of this disbelief, and was answered, that people who had never been out of their own country, and others well acquainted with the manners of the world, for they had travelled as far as France, had agreed the thing was impossible, and therefore it was so. My friends counselled me further, that as these men were infallible, and had each the leading of a circle, I should by all means obliterate this from my journal, and not attempt to inculcate in the minds of my readers the belief of a thing that men who had travelled pronounced to be impossible. They suggested to me, in the most friendly manner, how rudely a very learned and worthy

thy traveller had been treated for daring to maintain that he had eat part of a lion, a story I have already taken notice of in my introduction. They said, that, being convinced by these connoisseurs his having eat any part of a lion was *impossible*, he had abandoned this assertion altogether, and after only mentioned it in an appendix ; and this was the farthest I could possibly venture.

FAR from being a convert to such prudential reasons, I must for ever profess openly, that I think them unworthy of me. To represent as truth a thing I know to be a falsehood, not to avow a truth which I know I ought to declare; the one is fraud, the other cowardice ; I hope I am equally distant from them both ; and I pledge myself never to retract the fact here advanced, that the Abyssinians do feed in common upon live flesh, and that I myself have, for several years, been partaker of that disagreeable and beastly diet. On the contrary, I have no doubt, when time shall be given to read this history to an end, there will be very few, if they have candour enough to own it, that will not be ashamed of ever having doubted.

AT 11 o'clock of the 20th, we pitched our tent in a small plain, by the banks of a quick clear running stream; the spot is called Mai-Shum. There are no villages, at least that we saw, here. A peasant had made a very neat little garden on both sides of the rivulet, in which he had sown abundance of onions and garlic, and he had a species of pumpkin, which I thought was little inferior to a melon. This man guessed by our arms and horses that we were hunters, and he brought us a present of the fruits of his garden, and begged our assistance against a number of wild boars, which

carried havoc and desolation through all his labours, marks of which were, indeed, too visible everywhere. Such instances of industry are very rare in this country, and demanded encouragement. I paid him, therefore, for his greens; and sent two of my servants with him into the wood, and got on horseback myself. Mirza, my horse, indeed, as well as his master, had recruited greatly during our stay at Adowa, under the hospitable roof of our good friend Janni.

AMONGST us we killed five boars, all large ones, in the space of about two hours; one of which measured six feet nine inches; and, though he ran at an amazing speed near two miles, so as to be with difficulty overtaken by the horse, and was struck through and through with two heavy lances loaded at the end with iron, no person dared to come near him on foot, and he defended himself above half an hour, till, having no other arms left, I shot him with a horse-pistol. But the misfortune was, that, after our hunting had been crowned with such success, we did not dare to partake of the excellent venison we had acquired; for the Abyssinians hold pork of all kinds in the utmost detestation; and I was now become cautious, lest I should give offence, being at no great distance from the capital.

ON the 21st we left Mai-Shum at seven o'clock in the morning, proceeding through an open country, part sown with teff, but mostly overgrown with wild oats and high-grass. We afterwards travelled among a number of low hills, ascending and descending many of them, which occasioned more pleasure than fatigue. The jessamin continued to increase upon us, and it was the common bush of the country.

country. Several new species appeared, with five, nine, eleven petals, and plenty of the agam with four, these being all white. We found also large bushes of yellow, and orange and yellow jessamin, besides fine trees of kummel, and the boha, both of the largest size, beautifully covered with fruit and flowers, which we never before had seen.

WE now descended into a plain called Selech-lecha, the village of that name being two miles east of us. The country here has an air of gaiety and chearfulness superior to any thing we had ever yet seen. Poncet\* was right when he compared it to the most beauteous part of Provence. We crossed the plain through hedge-rows of flowering shrubs, among which the honeysuckle now made a principal figure, which is of one species only, the same known in England; but the flower is larger and perfectly white, not coloured on the outside as our honeysuckle is. Fine trees of all sizes were everywhere interspersed; and the vine, with small black grapes of very good flavour, hung in many places in festoons, joining tree to tree, as if they had been artificially twined and intended for arbours.

AFTER having passed this plain, we again entered a close country through defiles between mountains, thick covered with wood and bushes. We pitched our tent by the water-side judiciously enough as travellers, being quite surrounded with bushes, which prevented us from being seen in any direction.

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\* Poncet's voyage to Ethiopia, p. 99.

As the boha was the principal tree here, and in great beauty, being then in flower, I let the caravan pass, and alighted to make a proper choice for a drawing, when I heard a cry from my servants, "Robbers! Robbers!" I immediately got upon my mule to learn what alarm this might be, and saw, to my great surprise, part of my baggage strewed on the ground, the servants running, some leading, others on foot driving such of their mules as were unloaded before them; in a word, every thing in the greatest confusion possible. Having got to the edge of the wood, they faced about, and began to prepare their fire-arms; but as I saw the king's two servants, and the man that Janni sent with us, endeavouring all they could to pitch the tent, and my horse standing peaceably by them, I forbade our fugitives to fire, till they should receive orders from me. I now rode immediately up to the tent, and in my way was saluted from among the bushes with many stones, one of which gave me a violent blow upon the foot. At the same instant I received another blow with a small unripe pumpkin, just upon the belly, where I was strongly defended by the coarse cotton cloth wrapped several times about me by way of sash or girdle. As robbers fight with other arms than pumpkins, when I saw this fall at my feet I was no longer under apprehension.

NOTWITHSTANDING this disagreeable reception, I advanced towards them, crying out, We were friends, and Ras Michael's friends; and desired only to speak to them, and would give them what they wanted. A few stones were the only answer, but they did no hurt. I then gave Yafine my gun, thinking that might have given offence. The top of the tent being now up, two men came forward making great complaints,

complaints, but of what I did not understand, only that they seemed to accuse us of having wronged them. In short, we found the matter was this ; one of the Moors had taken a heap of straw which he was carrying to his ass, but the proprietor, at seeing this, had alarmed the village. Every body had taken lances and shields, but, not daring to approach for fear of the fire-arms, they had contented themselves with showering stones at us from their hiding-places, at a distance from among the bushes. We immediately told them, however, that though, as the king's guest, I had a title to be furnished with what was necessary, yet, if they were averse to it, I was very well content to pay for every thing they furnished, both for my men and beasts ; but that they must throw no stones, otherwise we would defend ourselves.

Our tent being now pitched, and every thing in order, a treaty soon followed. They consented to sell us what we wanted, but at extravagant prices, which, however, I was content to comply with. But a man of the village, acquainted with one of the king's servants, had communicated to him, that the pretence of the Moor's taking the straw was not really the reason of the uproar, for they made no use of it except to burn ; but that a report had been spread abroad, that an action had happened between Fasil and Ras Michael, in which the latter had been defeated, and the country no longer in fear of the Ras, had indulged themselves in their usual excesses, and, taking us for a caravan of Mahometans with merchandise, had resolved to rob us.

WELLETA MICHAEL, grandson to Ras Michael, commanded this part of the province ; and being but thirteen years of

of age, was not with his grandfather in the army, nor was he then at home, but at Gondar. However, his mother, Ozoro Welleta Michael, was at home, and her house just on the hill above. One of the king's servants had stolen away privately, and told her what had happened. The same evening, a party was sent down to the village, who took the ringleaders and carried them away, and left us for the night. They brought us a present also of provisions, and excuses for what had happened, warning us to be upon our guard the rest of the way, but they gave us positive assurance, at the same time, that no action had happened between Fasil and Ras Michael; on the contrary, it was confidently reported, that Fasil had left Buré, and retired to Metchakel, where, probably, he would repass the Nile into his own country, and stay there till the rains should oblige Michael to return to Gondar.

ON the 22d, we left Selech-lecha at seven o'clock in the morning, and, at eight, passed a village two hundred yards on our left, without seeing any one; but, advancing half a mile further, we saw a number of armed men from sixty to eighty, and we were told they were resolved to oppose our passage, unless their comrades, taken the night before, were released. The people that attended us on the part of Welleta Michael, as our escort, considered this as an insult, and advised me by all means to turn to the left to another village immediately under the hill, on which the house of Welleta Michael, mother to Welleta Gabriel their governor, was situated; as there we should find sufficient assistance to force these opponents to reason. We accordingly turned to the left, and marching through thick bushes, came to the top of the hill above the village, in sight of the governor's house,

house, just as about twenty men of the enemy's party reached the bottom of it.

THE governor's servants told us, that now was the time if they advanced to fire upon them, in which case they would instantly disperse, or else they would cut us off from the village. But I could not enter into the force of this reasoning, because, if this village was strong enough to protect us, which was the cause of our turning to the left to seek it, these twenty men, putting themselves between us and the village, took the most dangerous step for themselves possible, as they must unavoidably be destroyed; and, if the village was not strong enough to protect us, to begin with bloodshed was the way to lose our lives before a superior enemy. I therefore called to the twenty men to stop where they were, and send only one of their company to me; and, upon their not paying any attention, I ordered Yafine to fire a large blunderbuss over their heads, so as not to touch them. Upon the report, they all fled, and a number of people flocked to us from other villages; for my part, I believe some who had appeared against us came afterwards and joined us. We soon seemed to have a little army, and, in about half an hour, a party came from the governor's house with twenty lances and shields, and six firelocks, and, presently after, the whole multitude dispersed. It was about ten o'clock when, under their escort, we arrived at the town of Sirè, and pitched our tent in a strong situation, in a very deep gulley on the west extremity of the town.





## CHAP. VI

*Journey from Siré to Addergey, and Transactions there.*

THE province of Siré, properly so called, reaches from Axum to the Tacazzé. The town of Siré is situated on the brink of a very steep, narrow valley, and through this the road lies which is almost impassable. In the midst of this valley runs a brook bordered with palm-trees, some of which are grown to a considerable size, but bear no fruit; they were the first we had seen in Abyssinia.

THE TOWN of Siré is larger than that of Axum; it is in form of a half-moon fronting the plain, but its greatest breadth is at the west end; all the houses are of clay, and thatched; the roofs are in form of cones, as, indeed, are all in Abyssinia. Siré is famous for a manufacture of coarse cotton cloths, which pass for current money through all the province, of Tigré, and are valued at a drachm, the tenth-part of a wakea of gold, or near the value of an imperial dollar each; their breadth is a yard and quarter. Besides these

these, beads, needles, cohol, and incense at times only, are considered as money. The articles depend greatly on chance, which or whether any are current for the time or not; but the latter is often not demanded; and, for the first, there are modes and fashions among these barbarians, and all, except those of a certain colour and form, are useless. We have already spoken of the fashions, such as we have found them, at Kella, and we heard they were the same here at Siré. But these people were not of a humour to buy and sell with us. They were not perfectly satisfied that Michael was alive, and waited only a confirmation of the news of his defeat, to make their own terms with all strangers unfortunate enough to fall into their hands. On the other hand, we were in possession of superior force, and, knowing their inclinations, we treated them pretty much in the manner they would have done us.

ON the 22d of January, at night, I observed the passage of many stars over the meridian, and, after that, of the sun on the 23d at noon; taking a medium of all observations, I determined the latitude of Siré to be  $14^{\circ} 4' 35''$  north. The same evening, I observed an immersion of the first satellite of Jupiter, by which I concluded its longitude to be  $38^{\circ} 0' 15''$  east of the meridian of Greenwich.

ALTHOUGH Siré is situated in one of the finest countries in the world, like other places it has its inconveniencies. Putrid fevers, of the very worst kind, are almost constant here; and there did then actually reign a species of these that swept away a number of people daily. I did not think the behaviour of the inhabitants of this province to me was such as required my exposing myself to the infection for

the sake of relieving them ; I, therefore, left the fever and them to settle accounts together, without anywise interfering.

At Siré we heard the good news that Ras Michael, on the 10th of this month, had come up with Fasil at Fagitta, and entirely dispersed his army, after killing 10,000 men. This account, though not confirmed by any authority, struck all the mutinous of this province with awe ; and every man returned to his duty for fear of incurring the displeasure of this severe governor, which they well knew would instantly be followed by more than an adequate portion of vengeance, especially against those that had not accompanied him to the field.

On the 24th, at seven o'clock in the morning, we struck our tent at Siré, and passed through a vast plain. All this day we could discern no mountains, as far as eye could reach, but only some few detached hills, standing separate on the plain, covered with high grass, which they were then burning, to produce new with the first rains. The country to the north is altogether flat, and perfectly open ; and though we could not discover one village this day, yet it seemed to be well-inhabited, from the many people we saw on different parts of the plain, some at harvest, and some herding their cattle. The villages were probably concealed from us on the other side of the hills.

At four o'clock, we alighted at Maibinni at the bottom of a high, steep, bare cliff of red marble, bordering on purple, and very hard. Behind this is the small village of Maibinni ; and, on the south, another still higher hill, whose

whose top runs in an even ridge like a wall. At the bottom of this cliff, where our tent was pitched, the small rivulet Maisbinni rises, which, gentle and quiet as it then was, runs very violently in winter, first north from its source, and then winding to S. W. it falls in several cataracts, near a hundred feet high, into a narrow valley, through which it makes its way into the Tacazzé. Maisbinni, for wild and rude beauties, may compare with any place we had ever seen.

THIS day was the first cloudy one we had met with, or observed this year. The sun was covered for several hours, which announced our being near the large river Tacazzé.

ON the 25th, at seven in the morning, leaving Maisbinni, we continued on our road, shaded with trees of many different kinds. At half an hour after eight we passed the river, which at this place runs west; our road this day was thro' the same plain as yesterday, but broken and full of holes. At ten o'clock we rested in a large plain called Dagashaha; a hill in form of a cone stood single about two miles north from us; a thin straggling wood was to the S. E; and the water, rising in spongy, boggy, and dirty ground, was very indifferent; it lay to the west of us.

DAGASHAHA is a bleak and disagreeable quarter; but the mountain itself, being seen far off, was of great use to us in adjusting our bearings; the rather that, taking our departure from Dagashaha, we came immediately in sight of the high mountain of Samen, where Lamalmon, one of that ridge, is by much the most conspicuous; and over this lies the passage, or high road, to Gondar. We likewise see the rugged, hilly country of Salent, adjoining to the foot of the

mountains of Samen. We observed no villages this day from Maibinni to Dagashaha; nor did we discern, in the face of the country, any signs of culture or marks of great population. We were, indeed, upon the frontiers of two provinces which had for many years been at war.

ON the 26th, at six o'clock in the morning, we left Dagashaha. Our road was through a plain and level country, but, to appearance, desolated and uninhabited, being overgrown with high bent grass and bushes, as also destitute of water. We passed the solitary village Adega, three miles on our left, the only one we had seen. At eight o'clock we came to the brink of a prodigious valley, in the bottom of which runs the Tacazzè, next to the Nile the largest river in Upper Abyssinia. It rises in Angot (at least its principal branch) in a plain champain country, about 200 miles S. E. of Gondar, near a spot called Souami Midre. It has three spring heads, or sources, like the Nile; near it is the small village Gourri\*.

ANGOT is now in possession of the Galla, whose chief, Guangoul, is the head of the western Galla, once the most formidable invader of Abyssinia. The other branch of the Tacazzé rises in the frontiers of Begemder, near Dabuco; whence, running between Goulion, Lasta, and Belessen, it joins with the Angot branch, and becomes the boundary between Tigré and the other great division of the country called Amhara. This division arises from language only, for the Tacazzé passes nowhere near the province of Amhara; only all to the east of the Tacazzè is, in this general way of dividing the country, called Tigrè, and all to the westward,

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\* It signifies cold.

westward, from the Tacazzé to the Nile, Gojam, and the Agows, is called Amhara, because the language of that province is there spoken, and not that of Tigré or Geez. But I would have my reader on his guard against the belief that no languages but these two are spoken in these divisions; many different dialects are spoken in little districts in both, and, in some of them, neither the language of Tigré nor that of Amhara is understood.

I HAVE already sufficiently dwelt upon the ancient history, the names, manners, and people that inhabit the banks of this river. It was the Siris (or river of the dog-star) whilst that negro, uncivilized people, the Cushites of the island of Meroë, resided upon its banks. It was then called the Tannush Abay, or the lesser of two rivers that swelled with the tropical rains, which was the name the peasants, or unlearned, gave it, from comparison with the Nile. It was the Tacazzé in Derkin or the dwelling of the Taka, before it joined the Nile in Beja, and it was the Astaboras of those of the ancients that took the Nile for the Siris. It is now the Atbara, giving its name to that peninsula, which it incloses on the east as the Nile does on the west, and which was formerly the island of Meroë; but it never was the Tekesel, as authors have called it, deriving the name from the Ethiopic word Taka, which undoubtedly signifies, fear, terror, distress, or sadness; I mean, this was never the derivation of its name. Far from this idea, our Tacazzé is one of the pleasantest rivers in the world, shaded with fine lofty trees, its banks covered with bushes inferior in fragrance to no garden in the universe; its stream is the most limpid, its water excellent, and full of good fish of great variety, as its coverts are of all sorts of game.

It must be confessed, that, during the inundation, these things wear a contrary face. It carries in its bed near one-third of all the water that falls in Abyssinia; and we saw the mark the stream had reached the preceding year, eighteen feet above the bottom of the river, which we do not know was the highest point that it arrived at. But three fathoms it certainly had rolled in its bed; and this prodigious body of water, passing furiously from a high ground in a very deep descent, tearing up rocks and large trees in its course, and forcing down their broken fragments scattered on its stream, with a noise like thunder echoed from a hundred hills, these very naturally suggest an idea, that, from these circumstances, it is very rightly called the *terrible*. But then it must be considered, that all rivers in Abyssinia at the same time equally overflow; that every stream makes these ravages upon its banks; and that there is nothing in this that peculiarly affects the Tacazzè, or should give it this special name: at least, such is my opinion; though it is with great willingness I leave every reader in possession of his own, especially in etymology.

At half an hour past eight we began a gradual descent, at first easily enough, till we crossed the small brook called Maitemquet, or, *the water of baptism*. We then began to descend very rapidly in a narrow path, winding along the side of the mountain, all shaded with lofty timber-trees of great beauty. About three miles further we came to the edge of the stream at the principal ford of the Tacazzè, which is very firm and good; the bottom consists of small pebbles, without either sand or large stones. The river here at this time was fully 200 yards broad, the water perfectly clear, and running very swiftly; it was about three feet deep. This was the dry season

season of the year, when most rivers in Abyssinia ran now no more.

IN the middle of the stream we met a deserter from Ras Michael's army, with his firelock upon his shoulder, driving before him two miserable girls about ten years old, stark-naked, and almost famished to death, the part of the booty which had fallen to his share in laying waste the country of Maitsha, after the battle. We asked him of the truth of this news, but he would give us no satisfaction; sometimes he said there had been a battle, sometimes none. He apparently had some distrust, that one or other of the facts, being allowed to be true, might determine us as to some design we might have upon him and his booty. He had not, in my eyes, the air of a conqueror, but rather of a coward that had sneaked away, and stolen these two miserable wretches he had with him. I asked where Michael was? If at Buré? where, upon defeat of Fasil, he naturally would be. He said, No; he was at Ibaba, the capital of Maitsha; and this gave us no light, it being the place he would go to before, while detachments of his army might be employed in burning and laying waste the country of the enemy he had determined to ruin, rather than return to it some time after a battle. At last we were obliged to leave him. I gave him some flour and tobacco, both which he took very thankfully; but further intelligence he would not give.

THE banks of the Tacazzé are all covered, at the water's edge, with tamarisks; behind which grow high and straight trees, that seem to have gained additional strength from having often resisted the violence of the river. Few of these



ever lose their leaves, but are either covered with fruit, flower, or foliage the whole year; indeed, abundantly with all three during the six months fair weather. The Bohabab, indeed, called, in the Amharic language, Dooma, loses its leaf; it is the largest tree in Abyssinia; the trunk is never high; it diminishes very regularly from the top to the bottom, but not beautifully; it has the appearance of a large cannon, and puts out a multitude of strong branches, which do not fall low, or nearly horizontal, but follow a direction, making all of them smaller angles than that of  $45^{\circ}$ . The fruit is of the shape of a melon, rather longer for its thickness; within are black seeds in each of the cells, into which it is divided, and round them a white substance, very like fine sugar, which is sweet, with a small degree of very pleasant acid. I never saw it either in leaf or flower; the fruit hang dry upon the branches when they are deprived of both. The wood of this tree is soft and spongy, and of no use. The wild bees perforate the trunk, and lodge their honey in the holes made in it; and this honey is preferred to any other in Abyssinia.

BEAUTIFUL and pleasant, however, as this river is, like every thing created, it has its disadvantages. From the falling of the first rains in March till November it is death to sleep in the country adjoining to it, both within and without its banks; the whole inhabitants retire and live in villages on the top of the neighbouring mountains; and *these* are all robbers and assassins, who descend from their habitations on the heights to lie in wait for, and plunder the travellers that pass. Notwithstanding great pains have been taken by Michael, his son, and grandson, governors of Tigré

Tigré and Siré, this passage had never been so far cleared but, every month, people are cut off.

THE plenty of fish in this river occasions more than an ordinary number of crocodiles to resort hither. These are so daring and fearless, that when the river swells, so as to be passable only by people upon rafts, or skins blown up with wind, they are frequently carried off by these voracious and vigilant animals. There are also many hippopotami, which, in this country, are called Gomari. I never saw any of these in the Tacazzè; but at night we heard them snort, or groan, in many parts of the river near us. There are also vast multitudes of lions and hyænas in all these thickets. We were very much disturbed by them all night. The smell of our mules and horses had drawn them in numbers about our tent, but they did us no further harm, except obliging us to watch. I found the latitude of the ford, by many observations, the night of the 26th, taking a medium of them all, to be  $13^{\circ} 42' 45''$  north.

THE river Tacazzè is, as I have already said, the boundary of the province of Sirè. We now entered that of Samen, which was hostile to us, being commanded by Ayto Tesfos, who, since the murder of Joas, had never laid down his arms, nor acknowledged his neighbour, Michael, as Ras, nor Hannes the king, last made, as sovereign. He had remained on the top of a high rock called *the Jews Rock*, about eight miles from the ford. For these reasons, as well as that it was the most agreeable spot we had ever yet seen, we left our station on the Tacazzè with great regret.

ON the 27th of January, a little past six in the morning, we continued some short way along the river's side, and, at forty minutes past six o'clock, came to Ingerohha, a small rivulet rising in the plain above, which, after a short course through a deep valley, joins the Tacazzè. At half past seven we left the river, and began to ascend the mountains, which forms the south side of the valley, or banks of that river. The path is narrow, winds as much, and is as steep as the other, but not so woody. What makes it, however, still more disagreeable is, that every way you turn you have a perpendicular precipice into a deep valley below you. At half past eight we arrived at the top of the mountain; and, at half past nine, halted at Tabulaqué, having all the way passed among ruined villages, the monuments of Michael's cruelty or justice; for it is hard to say whether the cruelty, robberies, and violence of the former inhabitants did not deserve the severest chastisement.

We saw many people feeding cattle on the plain, and we again opened a market for flour and other provisions, which we procured in barter for cohob, incense, and beads. None but the young women appeared. They were of a lighter colour, taller, and in general more beautiful than those at Kella. Their noses seemed flatter than those of the Abyssinians we had yet seen. Perhaps the climate here was beginning that feature so conspicuous in the negroes in general, and particularly of those in this country called Shangalla, from whose country these people are not distant above two days journey. They seemed inclined to be very hard in all bargains but those of one kind, in which they were most reasonable and liberal. They all agreed, that these favours ought to be given and not sold, and that all coyness  
and

and courtship was but loss of time, which always might be employed better to the satisfaction of both. These people are less gay than those at Kella, and their conversation more rough and peremptory. They understood both the Tigre language and Amharic, although we supposed it was in compliance to us that they conversed chiefly in the former.

OUR tent was pitched at the head of Ingerohha, on the north of the plain of Tabulaqué. This river rises among the rocks at the bottom of a little eminence, in a small stream, which, from its source, runs very swiftly, and the water is warm. The peasants told us, that, in winter, in time of the rains, it became hot, and smoked. It was in taste, however, good; nor did we perceive any kind of mineral in it. Tabulaqué, Anderassa, and Mentefegla belong to the Shum of Addergey, and the viceroy of Samen, Ayto Tesfos. The large town of Hauza is about eight miles south-and-by-east of this.

ON the 28th, at forty minutes past six o'clock in the morning, we continued our journey; and, at half past seven, saw the small village Motecha on the top of the mountain, half a mile south from us. At eight, we crossed the river Aira; and, at half past eight, the river Tabul, the boundary of the district of Tabulaqué thick covered with wood, and especially a sort of cane, or bamboo, solid within, called there Shemale, which is used in making shafts for javelins, or light darts thrown from the hand, either on foot or on horseback, at hunting or in war.

WE alighted on the side of Anderassa, rather a small stream, and which had now ceased running, but which

gives the name to the district through which we were passing. Its water is muddy and ill-tasted, and falls into the Tacazzè, as do all the rivers we had yet passed. Daga-ha-ha bears N. N. E. from this station. A great dew fell this night; the first we had yet observed.

THE 29th, at six o'clock in the morning, we continued our journey from Anderassa, through thick woods of small trees, quite overgrown, and covered with wild oats, reeds, and long grass, so that it was very difficult to find a path through them. We were not without considerable apprehension, from our nearness to the Shangalla, who were but two days journey distant from us to the W. N. W. and had frequently made excursions to the wild country where we now were. Hauza was upon a mountain south from us; after travelling along the edge of a hill, with the river on our left hand, we crossed it: it is called the Bowiha, and is the largest we had lately seen.

At nine o'clock we encamped upon the small river Angari, that gives its name to a district which begins at the Bowiha where Anderassa ends. The river Angari is much smaller than the Bowiha: it rises to the westward in a plain near Montefegla; after running half a mile, it falls down a steep precipice into a valley, then turns to the N. E. and, after a course of two miles and a half farther, joins the Bowiha a little above the ford.

THE small village Angari lies about two miles S. S. W. on the top of a hill. Hauza (which seems a large town formed by a collection of many villages) is six miles south, pleasantly situated among a variety of mountains, all of different

ferent and extraordinary shapes ; some are straight like columns, and some sharp in the point, and broad in the base, like pyramids and obelisks, and some like cones. All these, for the most part inaccessible, unless with pain and danger to those that know the paths, are places of refuge and safety in time of war, and are agreeably separated from each other by small plains producing grain. Some of these, however, have at the top water and small flats that can be sown, sufficient to maintain a number of men, independent of what is doing below them. Hauza signifies *delight*, or *pleasure*, and, probably, such a situation of the country has given the name to it. It is chiefly inhabited by Mahometan merchants, is the *entre-pot* between Masuah and Gondar, and there are here people of very considerable substance.

THE 30th, at seven in the morning, we left Angari, keeping along the side of the river. We then ascended a high hill covered with grass and trees, through a very difficult and steep road ; which ending, we came to a small and agreeable plain, with pleasant hills on each side ; this is called Mentefegla. At half past seven we were in the middle of three villages of the same name, two to the right and one on the left, about half a mile distance. At half past nine we passed a small river called Daracoy, which serves as the boundary between Addergey and this small district Mentefegla. At a quarter past ten, we incamped at Addergey, near a small rivulet called Mai-Lumi, the river of limes, or lemons, in a plain scarce a mile square, surrounded on each side with very thick wood in form of an amphitheatre. Above this wood, are bare, rugged, and barren mountains. Midway in the cliff is a miserable village, that seems rather to hang than to stand there, scarce  
a yard.

a yard of level ground being before it to hinder its inhabitants from falling down the precipice. The wood is full of lemons and wild citrons, from which it acquires its name. Before the tent, to the westward, was a very deep valley, which terminated this little plain in a tremendous precipice.

THE river Mai-Lumi, rising above the village, falls into the wood, and there it divides itself in two : one branch furrounds the north of the plain, the other the south, and falls down a rock on each side of the valley, where they unite, and, after having run about a quarter of a mile further, are precipitated into a cataract of 150 feet high, and run in a direction south-west into the Tacazzé. The river Mai-Lumi was, at this time, but small, although it is violent in winter; beyond this valley are five hills, and on the top of each is a village. The Shum resides in the one that is in the middle. He bade us a seeming hearty welcome, but had malice in his heart against us, and only waited to know for certainty if it was a proper time to gratify his avarice. A report was spread about with great confidence, that Ras Michael had been defeated by Fasil; that Gondar had rebelled, and Woggora was all in arms; so that it was certain loss of life to attempt the passage of Lamalmon.

FOR our part, we conceived this story to be without foundation, and that, on the contrary, the news were true which we had heard at Siré and Adowa, *viz.* That Michael was victorious, and Fasil beaten; and we were, therefore, resolved to abide by this, as well knowing, that, if the contrary had happened, every place between the Tacazzé and Gondar was as fatal to us as any thing we were to meet with on Lamalmon.

mon could be ; the change of place made no difference ; the dispositions of the people towards Michael and his friends we knew to be the same throughout the kingdom, and that our only safety remained on certain and good news coming from the army, or in the finishing our journey with expedition, before any thing bad happened, or was certainly known.

THE hyænas this night devoured one of the best of our mules. They are here in great plenty, and so are lions ; the roaring and grumbling of the latter, in the part of the wood nearest our tent, greatly disturbed our beasts, and prevented them from eating their provender. I lengthened the strings of my tent, and placed the beasts between them. The white ropes, and the tremulous motion made by the impression of the wind, frightened the lions from coming near us. I had procured from Janni two small brass bells, such as the mules carry. I had tied these to the storm-strings of the tent, where their noise, no doubt, greatly contributed to our beasts safety from these ravenous, yet cautious animals, so that we never saw them ; but the noise they made, and, perhaps, their smell, so terrified the mules, that, in the morning, they were drenched in sweat as if they had been a long journey.

THE brutish hyæna was not so to be deterred. I shot one of them dead on the night of the 31st of January, and, on the 2d of February, I fired at another so near, that I was confident of killing him. Whether the balls had fallen out, or that I had really missed him with the first barrel, I know not, but he gave a snarl and a kind of bark upon the first shot, advancing directly upon me as if unhurt. The second  
shot,



shot, however, took place, and laid him without motion on the ground. Yafine and his men killed another with a pike; and such was their determined coolness, that they stalked round about us with the familiarity of a dog, or any other domestic animal brought up with man.

BUT we were still more incommoded by a lesser animal, a large, black ant, little less than an inch long, which, coming out from under the ground, demolished our carpets, which they cut all into shreds, and part of the lining of our tent likewise, and every bag or sack they could find. We had first seen them in great numbers at Angari, but here they were intolerable. Their bite causes a considerable inflammation, and the pain is greater than that which arises from the bite of a scorpion; they are called *gundan*.

ON the 1st of February the Shum sent his people to value, as he said, our merchandise, that we might pay custom. Many of the Moors, in our caravan, had left us to go a near way to Hauza. We had at most five or six asses, including those belonging to Yafine. I humoured them so far as to open the cases where were the telescopes and quadrant, or, indeed, rather shewed them open, as they were not shut from the observation I had been making. They could only wonder at things they had never before seen.

ON the 2d of February the Shum came himself, and a violent altercation ensued. He insisted upon Michael's defeat: I told him the contrary news were true, and begged him to beware lest it should be told to the Ras upon his return that he had propagated such a falsehood. I told him also we had advice that the Ras's servants were now waiting for us

at Lamalmon, and insisted upon his suffering us to depart. On the other hand, he threatened to send us to Ayto Tesfos. I answered, "Ayto Tesfos was a friend to Ayto Aylo, under whose protection I was, and a servant to the Iteghé, and was likelier to punish him for using me ill, than to approve of it, but that I would not suffer him to send me either to Ayto Tesfos, or an inch out of the road in which I was going." He said, "That I was mad;" and held a consultation with his people for about half an hour, after which he came in again, seemingly quite another man, and said, he would dispatch us on the morrow, which was the 3d, and would send us that evening some provisions. And, indeed, we now began to be in need, having only flour barely sufficient to make bread for one meal next day. The miserable village on the clift had nothing to barter with us; and none from the five villages about the Shum had come near us, probably by his order. As he had softened his tone, so did I mine. I gave him a small present, and he went away repeating his promises. But all that evening passed without provision, and all next day without his coming, so we got every thing ready for our departure. Our supper did not prevent our sleeping, as all our provision was gone, and we had tasted nothing all that day since our breakfast.

THE country of the Shangalla lies forty miles N. N. W. of this, or rather more westerly. All this district from the Tacazzé is called, in the language of Tigré, Salent, and Talent in Amharic. This probably arises from the name being originally spelled with (Tz), which has occasioned the difference, the one language omitting the first letter, the other the second.

At Addergey, the 31st day of January, at noon, I observed the meridian altitude of the sun, and, at night, the passage of seven different stars over the meridian, by a medium of all which, I found that the latitude of Addergey is  $13^{\circ} 24' 56''$  North. And on the morning of the 1st of February, at the same place, I observed an immersion of the second satellite of Jupiter, by which I concluded the longitude of Addergey to be  $37^{\circ} 57'$  east of the meridian of Greenwich.

On the 4th of February, at half past nine in the morning, we left Addergey: hunger pressing us, we were prepared to do it earlier, and for this we had been up since five in the morning; but our loss of a mule obliged us, when we packed up our tent, to arrange our baggage differently. While employed at making ready for our departure, which was just in the dawn of day, a hyæna, unseen by any of us, fastened upon one of Yafine's asses, and had almost pulled his tail away. I was busied at gathering the tent-pins into a sack, and had placed my musket and bayonet ready against a tree, as it is at that hour, and the close of the evening, you are always to be on guard against banditti. A boy, who was servant to Yafine, saw the hyæna first, and flew to my musket. Yafine was disjoining the poles of the tent, and, having one half of the largest in his hand, he ran to the assistance of his ass, and in that moment the musket went off, luckily charged with only one ball, which gave Yafine a flesh wound between the thumb and forefinger of his left hand. The boy instantly threw down the musket, which had terrified the hyæna and made him let go the ass; but he stood ready to fight Yafine, who, not amusing himself with the choice of weapons, gave him so rude

rude a blow with the tent-pole upon his head, that it felled him to the ground ; others, with pikes, put an end to his life.

WE were then obliged to turn our cares towards the wounded. Yafine's wound was soon seen to be a trifle ; besides, he was a man not easily alarmed on such occasions. But the poor afs was not so easily comforted. The stump remained, the tail hanging by a piece of it, which we were obliged to cut off. The next operation was actual cautery ; but, as we had made no bread for breakfast, our fire had been early out. We, therefore, were obliged to tie the stump round with whipcord, till we could get fire enough to heat an iron.

WHAT sufficiently marked the voracity of these beasts, the hyænas, was, that the bodies of their dead companions, which we hauled a long way from us, and left there, were almost entirely eaten by the survivors the next morning ; and I then observed, for the first time, that the hyæna of this country was a different species from those I had seen in Europe, which had been brought from Asia or America.



## CHAP. VII.

*Journey over Lamalmon to Gondar.*

IT was on account of these delays that we did not leave Ad-dergey till near ten o'clock in the forenoon of the 4th of February. We continued our journey along the side of a hill, through thick wood and high grass; then descended into a steep, narrow valley, the sides of which had been shaded with high trees, but in burning the grass the trees were consumed likewise; and the shoots from the roots were some of them above eight feet high since the tree had thus suffered that same year. The river Angueah runs through the middle of this valley; after receiving the small streams, before mentioned, it makes its way into the Tacazzé. It is a very clear, swift-running river, something less than the Bowiha.

WHEN we had just reached the river-side, we saw the Shum coming from the right hand across us. There were  
nine

nine horsemen in all, and fourteen or fifteen beggarly footmen. He had a well-dressed young man going before him carrying his gun, and had only a whip in his own hand; the rest had lances in theirs; but none of the horsemen had shields. It was universally agreed, that this seemed to be a party set for us, and that he probably had others before appointed to join him, for we were sure his nine horse would not venture to do any thing. Upon the first appearance, we had stopped on this side of the river; but Welleta Michael's men, who were to accompany us to Lamalmon, and Janni's servant, told us to cross the river, and make what speed we could, as the Shum's government ended on this side.

OUR people were now all on foot, and the Moors drove the beasts before them. I got immediately upon horseback, when they were then about five hundred yards below, or scarcely so much. As soon as they observed us drive our beasts into the river, one of their horsemen came galloping up, while the others continued at a smart walk. When the horseman was within twenty yards distance of me, I called upon him to stop, and, as he valued his life, not approach nearer. On this he made no difficulty to obey, but seemed rather inclined to turn back. As I saw the baggage all laid on the ground at the foot of a small round hill, upon the gentle ascent of which my servants all stood armed, I turned about my horse, and with Yafine, who was by my side, began to cross the river. The horseman upon this again advanced; again I cried to him to stop. He then pointed behind him, and said, "The Shum!" I desired him peremptorily to stop, or I would fire; upon which he turned round, and the others joining him, they held a minute's council.

counsel together, and came all forward to the river, where they paused a moment as if counting our number, and then began to enter the stream. Yafine now cried to them in Amharic, as I had done before in Tigré, desiring them, as they valued their lives, to come no nearer. They stopt, a sign of no great resolution ; and, after some altercation, it was agreed the Shum, and his son with the gun, should pass the river.

THE Shum complained violently that we had left Addergey without his leave, and now were attacking him in his own government upon the high-road. "A pretty situation," said I, "was ours at Addergey, where the Shum left the king's stranger no other alternative but dying with hunger, or being ate by the hyæna."

"THIS is not your government," says Janni's servant ; "you know my master, Ayto Aylo, commands here."—"And who is attacking you on the road?" says the Sirè servant. "Is it like peaceable people, or banditti, to come mounted on horseback and armed as you are? Would not your mules and your foot-servants have been as proper? and would not you have been better employed, with the king and Ras Michael, fighting the Galla, as you gave your promise, than here molesting passengers on the road?"—"You lie," says the Shum, "I never promised to go with your Ras;" and on this he lifted up his whip to strike Welleta Michael's servant; but that fellow, though quiet enough, was not of the kind to be beaten. "By G—d! Shum," says he, "offer to strike me again, and I will lay you dead among your horse's feet, and my master will say I did well. Never call for your men; you should have taken the red slip off your  
gun

gun before you came from home to-day to follow us. Why, if you was to shoot, you would be left alone in our hands, as all your fellows on the other side would run at the noise even of your own gun.

“ FRIENDS, said I, you understand one another’s grievances better than I do. My only business here is to get to Lamalmon as soon as possible. Now, pray, Shum, tell me what is your business with me? and why have you followed me beyond your government, which is bounded by that river?”—He said, “That I had stolen away privately, without paying custom.”—“I am no merchant, replied I; I am the king’s guest, and pay no custom; but as far as a piece of red Surat cotton cloth will content you, I will give it you, and we shall part friends.”—He then answered, “That two ounces of gold were what my dues had been rated at, and would either have that, or he would follow me to Debra Toon.”—“Bind him and carry him to Debra Toon, says the Siré fervant, or I shall go and bring the Shum of Debra Toon to do it. By the head of Michael, Shum, it shall not be long before I take you out of your bed for this.”

I now gave orders to my people to load the mules. At hearing this, the Shum made a signal for his company to cross; but Yafine, who was opposite to them, again ordered them to stop. “Shum, said I, you intend to follow us, apparently with a design to do us some harm. Now we are going to Debra Toon, and you are going thither. If you chuse to go with us, you may in all honour and safety; but your servants shall not be allowed to join you, nor you join them; and if they but attempt to do us harm, we will for certain revenge ourselves on you. There is a piece



of ordnance," continued I, shewing him a large blunderbuss, "a cannon, that will sweep fifty such fellows as you to eternity in a moment. This shall take the care of them, and we shall take the care of you; but join you shall not till we are at Debra Toon."

THE young man that carried the gun, the case of which had never been off, desired leave to speak with his father, as they now began to look upon themselves as prisoners. The conversation lasted about five minutes; and our baggage was now on the way, when the Shum said, he would make a proposal:—"Since I had no merchandise, and was going to Ras Michael, he would accept of the red cloth, its value being about a crown, provided we swore to make no complaint of him at Gondar, nor speak of what had happened at Debra Toon; while he likewise would swear, after having joined his servants, that he would not again pass that river." Peace was concluded upon these terms. I gave him a piece of red Surat cotton cloth, and added some cohol, incense, and beads for his wives. I gave to the young man that carried the gun two strings of bugles to adorn his legs, for which he seemed most wonderfully grateful. The Shum returned, not with a very placid countenance; his horsemen joined him in the middle of the stream, and away they went soberly together, and in silence.

HAUZA was from this S. E. eight miles distant. Its mountains, of so many uncommon forms, had a very romantic appearance. At one o'clock we alighted at the foot of one of the highest, called Debra Toon, about half way between the mountain and village of that name, which was on the side of the hill about a mile N.W. Still further to the N. W.

is a desert, hilly district, called Adebarea, the country of the slaves, as being the neighbourhood of the Shangalla, the whole country between being waste and uninhabited.

THE mountains of Waldubba, resembling those of Adebarea, lay north of us about four or five miles. Waldubba, which signifies *the Valley of the Hyæna*, is a territory entirely inhabited by the monks, who, for mortification's sake, have retired to this unwholesome, hot, and dangerous country, voluntarily to spend their lives in penitence, meditation, and prayer. This, too, is the only retreat of great men in disgrace or in disgust. These first shave their hair, and put on a cowl like the monks, renouncing the world for solitude, and taking vows which they resolve to keep no longer than exigencies require; after which they return to the world again, leaving their cowl and sanctity in Waldubba.

THESE monks are held in great veneration; are believed by many to have the gift of prophecy, and some of them to work miracles, and are very active instruments to stir up the people in time of trouble. Those that I have seen out of Waldubba in Gondar, and about Koscam, never shewed any great marks of abstinence; they ate and drank every thing without scruple, and in large quantities too. They say they live otherwise in Waldubba, and perhaps it may be so. There are women, also, whom we should call Nuns, who, though not residing in Waldubba, go at times thither, and live in a familiarity with these saints, that has very little favour of spirituality; and many of these, who think the living in community with this holy fraternity has not in it perfection enough to satisfy their devotion, retire, one of each sex, a hermit and a nun, sequestering themselves for months,

to eat herbs together in private upon the top of the mountains. These, on their return, are shewn as miracles of holiness,—lean, enervated, and exhausted. Whether this is wholly to be laid to the charge of the herbs, is more than I will take upon me to decide, never having been at these retirements of Waldubba.

VIOLENT fevers perpetually reign there. The inhabitants are all of the colour of a corpse; and their neighbours, the Shangalla, by constant inroads, destroy many of them, though lately they have been stopped, as they say, by the prayers of the monks. I suppose their partners, the nuns, had their share in it, as both of them are said to be equally superior in holiness and purity of living to what their predecessors formerly were. But, not to derogate from the efficaciousness of their prayers, the *natural cause* why the Shangalla molest them no more, is the small-pox, which has greatly reduced their strength and number, and extinguished, to a man, whole tribes of them.

THE water is both scarce and bad at Debra Toon, there being but one spring, or fountain, and it was exceedingly ill-tasted. We did not intend to make this a station; but, having sent a servant to Hauza to buy a mule in room of that which the hyæna had eaten, we were afraid to leave our man, who was not yet come forward, lest he should fall in with the Shum of Addergey, who might stop the mule for our arrears of customs.

THE pointed mountain of Dagashaha continued still visible; I set it this day by the compass, and it bore due N.E. We had not seen any cultivated ground since we passed the Tacazzè.

THE

THE 5th, at seven o'clock in the morning, we left Debra Toon, and came to the edge of a deep valley bordered with wood, the descent of which is very steep. The Anzo, larger and more rapid than the Angueah, runs through the middle of this valley; its bed is full of large, smooth stones, and the sides composed of hard rock, and difficult to descend; the stream is equally clear and rapid with the other. We ascended the valley on the other side, through the most difficult road we had met with since that of the valley of Sirè. At ten o'clock we found ourselves in the middle of three villages, two to the right, and one on the left; they are called Adamara, from Adama a mountain, on the east side of which is Tchober. At eleven o'clock we encamped at the foot of the mountain Adama, in a small piece of level ground, after passing a pleasant wood of no considerable extent. Adama, in Amharic, signifies *pleasant*; and nothing can be more wildly so than the view from this station.

TCHOBEB is close at the foot of the mountain, surrounded on every side, except the north, by a deep valley covered with wood. On the other side of this valley are the broken hills which constitute the rugged banks of the Anzo. On the point of one of these, most extravagantly shaped, is the village Shahagaanah, projecting as it were over the river; and, behind these, the irregular and broken mountains of Salent appear, especially those around Hauza, in forms which European mountains never wear; and still higher, above these, is the long ridge of Samen, which run along in an even stretch till they are interrupted by the high conical top of Lamalmon, reaching above the clouds, and reckoned to be the highest hill in Abyssinia, over the steepest part of

which, by some fatality, the reason I do not know, the road of all caravans to Gondar must lie.

As soon as we passed the Anzo, immediately on our right is that part of Waldubba, full of deep valleys and woods, in which the monks used to hide themselves from the incursions of the Shangalla, before they found out the more convenient defence by the prayers and superior sanctity of the present saints. Above this is Adamara, where the Mahometans have considerable villages, and, by their populousness and strength, have greatly added to the safety of the monks, perhaps not altogether completed yet by the purity of their lives. Still higher than these villages is Tchober, where we now encamped.

On the left hand, after passing the Anzo, all is Shahagannah, till you come to the river Zarima. It extends in an east and west direction, almost parallel to the mountains of Samen, and in this territory are several considerable villages; the people are much addicted to robbery, and rebellion, in which they were engaged at this time. Above Salent is Abbergalè, and above that Tamben, which is one of the principal provinces in Tigrè, commanded at present by Kefla Yafous, an officer of the greatest merit and reputation in the Abyssinian army.

On the 6th, at six o'clock in the morning, we left Tchober, and passed a wood on the side of the mountain. At a quarter past eight we crossed the river Zarima, a clear stream running over a bottom of stones. It is about as large as the Anzo. On the banks of this river, and all this day, we passed under trees larger and more beautiful than any  
we

we had seen since leaving the Tacazzé. After having crossed the Zarima, we entered a narrow defile between two mountains, where ran another rivulet: we continued advancing along the side of it, till the valley became so narrow as to leave no room but in the bed of the rivulet itself. It is called Mai-Agam, or the water or brook of jessamin<sup>1</sup> and falls into the Zarima, at a small distance from the place wherein we passed it. It was dry at the mouth, (the water being there absorbed and hid under the sand) but above, where the ground was firmer, there ran a brisk stream of excellent water, and it has the appearance of being both broad, deep, and rapid in winter. At ten o'clock we encamped upon its banks, which are here bordered with high trees of cummel, at this time both loaded with fruit and flowers. There are also here a variety of other curious trees and plants; in no place, indeed, had we seen more, except on the banks of the Tacazzé. Mai-Agam consists of three villages; one, two miles distant, east-and-by-north, one at same distance, N. N. W.; the third at one mile distance, S. E. by south.

On the 7th, at six o'clock in the morning, we began to ascend the mountain; at a quarter past seven the village Liklay east of us. Murafs, a country full of low but broken mountains, and deep narrow valleys, bears N. W. and Walkayt in the same direction, but farther off. At a quarter past eight, Gingerohha, distant from us about a mile S. W. it is a village situated upon a mountain that joins Lamalmon. Two miles to the N. E. is the village Taguzait on the mountain which we were ascending. It is called Guza by the Jesuits, who strangely say, that the Alps and Pyreneans are inconsiderable eminences to it. Yet, with all deference to  
this

this observation, Taguzait, or Guza, though really the base of Lamalmon, is not a quarter of a mile high.

TEN minutes before nine o'clock we pitched our tent on a small plain called Dippebaha, on the top of the mountain, above a hundred yards from a spring, which scarcely was abundant enough to supply us with water, in quality as indifferent as it was scanty. The plain bore strong marks of the excessive heat of the sun, being full of cracks and chasms, and the grass burnt to powder. There are three small villages so near each other that they may be said to compose one. Near them is the church of St George, on the top of a small hill to the eastward, surrounded with large trees.

SINCE passing the Tacazzé we had been in a very wild country, left so, for what I know, by nature, at least now lately rendered more so by being the theatre of civil war. The whole was one wilderness without inhabitants, unless at Addergey. The plain of Dippebaha had nothing of this appearance; it was full of grass, and interspersed with flowering shrubs, jessamin, and roses, several kinds of which were beautiful, but only one fragrant. The air was very fresh and pleasant; and a great number of people, passing to and fro, animated the scene.

WE met this day several monks and nuns of Waldubba, I should say *pairs*, for they were two and two together. They said they had been at the market of Dobarké on the side of Lamalmon, just above Dippebaha. Both men and women, but especially the latter, had large burdens of provisions on their shoulders, bought that day, as they said,

said, at Dobarkè, which shewed me they did not wholly depend upon the herbs of Waldubba for their support. The women were stout and young, and did not seem, by their complexion, to have been long in the mortifications of Waldubba. I rather thought that they had the appearance of healthy mountaineers, and were, in all probability, part of the provisions bought for the convent; and, by the sample, one would think the monks had the first choice of the market, which was but fit, and is a custom observed likewise in Catholic countries. The men seemed very miserable, and ill-clothed, but had a great air of ferocity and pride in their faces. They are distinguished only from the laity by a yellow cowl, or cap, on their head. The cloth they wear round them is likewise yellow, but in winter they wear skins dyed of the same colour.

On the 8th, at three quarters past six o'clock in the morning, we left Dippebaha, and, at seven, had two small villages on our left; one on the S. E. distant two miles, the other on the south, one mile off. They are called Wora, and so is the territory for some space on each side of them; but, beyond the valley, all is Shahagaanah to the root of Lamalmon. At a quarter past seven, the village of Gingerohha was three miles on our right; and we were now ascending Lamalmon, through a very narrow road, or rather path, for it scarcely was two feet wide any where. It was a spiral winding up the side of the mountain, always on the very brink of a precipice. Torrents of water, which in winter carry prodigious stones down the side of this mountain, had divided this path into several places, and opened to us a view of that dreadful abyss below, which few heads can (mine at least could not) bear to look down upon. We were here



obliged to unload our baggage, and, by slow degrees, crawl up the hill, carrying them little by little upon our shoulders round these chasms where the road was intersected. The mountains grow steeper, the paths narrower, and the breaches more frequent as we ascend. Scarce were our mules, though unloaded, able to scramble up, but were perpetually falling; and, to increase our difficulties, which, in such cases, seldom come single, a large number of cattle was descending, and seemed to threaten to push us all into the gulf below. After two hours of constant toil, at nine o'clock we alighted in a small plain called Kedus, or St Michael, from a church and village of that name, neither beast nor man being able to go a step further.

THE plain of St Michael, where we now were, is at the foot of a steep cliff which terminates the west side of Lamalmon. It is here perpendicular like a wall, and a few trees only upon the top of the cliff. Over this precipice flow two streams of water, which never are dry, but run in all seasons. They fall into a wood at the bottom of this cliff, and preserve it in continual verdure all the year, tho' the plain itself below, as I have said, is all rent into chasms, and cracked by the heat of the sun. These two streams form a considerable rivulet in the plain of St Michael, and are a great relief both to men and cattle in this tedious and difficult passage over the mountain.

THE air on Lamalmon is pleasant and temperate. We found here our appetite return, with a chearfulness, lightness of spirits, and agility of body, which indicated that our nerves had again resumed their wonted tone, which they had lost in the low, poisonous, and sultry air on the

coast of the Red Sea. The sun here is indeed hot, but in the morning a cool breeze never fails, which increases as the sun rises high. In the shade it is always cool. The thermometer, in the shade, in the plain of St Michael, this day, was 76°, wind N. W.

LAMALMON, as I have said, is the pass through which the road of all caravans to Gondar lies. It is here they take an account of all baggage and merchandise, which they transmit to the Negadé Ras, or chief officer of the customs at Gondar, by a man whom they send to accompany the caravan. There is also a present, or *awide*, due to the private proprietor of the ground; and this is levied with great rigour and violence, and, for the most part, with injustice; so that this station, which, by the establishment of the customhouse, and nearness to the capital, should be in a particular manner attended to by government, is always the place where the first robberies and murders are committed in unsettled times. Though we had nothing with us which could be considered as subject to duty, we submitted every thing to the will of the robber of the place, and gave him his present. If he was not satisfied, he seemed to be so, which was all we wanted.

We had obtained leave to depart early in the morning of the 9th, but it was with great regret we were obliged to abandon our Mahometan friends into hands that seemed disposed to shew them no favour. The king was in Maitsha, or Damot, that is to say, far from Gondar, and various reports were spread abroad about the success of the campaign; and these people only waited for an unfavourable event to

make a pretence for robbing our fellow-travellers of every thing they had.

THE persons whose right it was to levy these contributions were two, a father and son; the old man was dressed very decently, spoke little, but smoothly, and had a very good carriage. He professed a violent hatred to all Mahometans, on account of their religion, a sentiment which seemed to promise nothing favourable to our friend Yafine and his companions: but, in the evening, the son, who seemed to be the active man, came to our tent, and brought us a quantity of bread and bouza, which his father had ordered before. He seemed to be much taken with our fire-arms, and was very inquisitive about them. I gave him every sort of satisfaction, and, little by little, saw I might win his heart entirely; which I very much wished to do, that I might free our companions from bondage.

THE young man it seems was a good soldier; and, having been in several actions under Ras Michael, as a fusileer, he brought his gun, and insisted on shooting at marks. I humoured him in this; but as I used a rifle, which he did not understand, he found himself overmatched, especially by the greatness of the range, for he shot straight enough. I then shewed him the manner we shot flying; there being quails in abundance, and wild pigeons, of which I killed several on wing, which left him in the utmost astonishment. Having got on horseback, I next went through the exercise of the Arabs, with a long spear and a short javelin. This was more within his comprehension, as he had seen something like it; but he was wonderfully taken with the fierce and fiery appearance of my horse, and, at the same time, with his

his docility, the form of his saddle, bridle, and accoutrements. He threw at last the sandals off his feet, twisted his upper garment into his girdle, and set off at so furious a rate, that I could not help doubting whether he was in his sober understanding.

It was not long till he came back, and with him a man-servant carrying a sheep and a goat, and a woman carrying a jar of honey-wine. I had not yet quitted the horse; and when I saw what his intention was, I put Mirza to a gallop, and, with one of the barrels of the gun, shot a pigeon, and immediately fired the other into the ground. There was nothing after this that could have surprized him, and it was repeated several times at his desire; after which he went into the tent, where he invited himself to my house at Gondar. There I was to teach him every thing he had seen. We now swore perpetual friendship; and a horn or two of hydromel being emptied, I introduced the case of our fellow-travellers, and obtained a promise that we should have leave to set out together. He would, moreover, take no aside, and said he would be favourable in his report to Gondar.

MATTERS were so far advanced, when a servant of Michael's arrived, sent by Petros, (Janni's brother) who had obtained him from Ozoro Esther. This put an end to all our difficulties. Our young foldier also kept his word, and a mere trifle of aside was given, rather by the Moor's own desire than from demand, and the report of our baggage, and dues thereon, were as low as could be wished. Our friend likewise sent his own servant to Gondar with the billet to accompany the caravan. But the news brought by his servant were still better than all this. Ras Michael had actual-

ly beaten Fasil, and forced him to retire to the other side of the Nile, and was then in Maitsha, where it was thought he would remain with the army all the rainy season. This was just what I could have wished, as it brought me at once to the neighbourhood of the sources of the Nile, without the smallest shadow of fear or danger.

ON the 9th of February, at seven o'clock, we took leave of the friends whom we had so newly acquired at Lamalmon, all of us equally joyful and happy at the news. We began to ascend what still remained of the mountain, which, though steep and full of bushes, was much less difficult than that which we had passed. At a quarter past seven we arrived at the top of Lamalmon, which has, from below, the appearance of being sharp-pointed. On the contrary, we were much surprised to find there a large plain, part in pasture, but more bearing grain. It is full of springs, and seems to be the great reservoir from whence arise most of the rivers that water this part of Abyssinia. A multitude of streams issue from the very summit in all directions; the springs boil out from the earth in large quantities, capable of turning a mill. They plow, sow, and reap here at all seasons; and the husbandman must blame his own indolence, and not the soil, if he has not three harvests. We saw, in one place, people busy cutting down wheat; immediately next to it, others at the plough; and the adjoining field had green corn in the ear; a little further, it was not an inch above the ground.

LAMALMON is on the N. W. part of the mountains of Samen. That of Gingerohha, with two pointed tops, joins it on the north, and ends these mountains here, and is separated

ted from the plain of St Michael by a very deep gully. Neither Lamalmon nor Gingerohha, though higher than the mountains of Tigré, are equal in height to some of those of Samen. I take those to the S. E. to be much higher, and, above all, that sharp-pointed hill Amba Gideon, the present residence of the governor of Samen, Ayto Tesfos. This is otherwise called the *Jews-Rock*, famous in the history of this country for the many revolts of the Jews against the Abyssinian kings.

THE mountain is everywhere so steep and high, that it is not enough to say against the will, but without the assistance of those above, no one from below can venture to ascend. On the top is a large plain, affording plenty of pasture, as well as room for plowing and sowing for the maintenance of the army; and there is water, at all seasons, in great plenty, and even fish in the streams upon it; so that, although the inhabitants of the mountain had been often besieged for a considerable time together, they suffered little inconvenience from it, nor ever were taken unless by treason; except by Christopher de Gama and his Portuguese, who are said, by their own historians, to have stormed this rock, and put the Mahometan garrison to the sword. No mention of this honourable conquest is made in the annals of Abyssinia, though they give the history of this campaign of Don Christopher in the life of Claudius, or Atzenaf Segued.

ON the top of the cliff where we now were, on the left hand of the road to Gondar, we filled a tube with quick-silver, and purged it perfectly of outward air; it stood this day at 20½ English inches. Dagashaha bears N.E. by E. from our present  
 v. iii. a a • station

station upon Lamalmon. The language of Lamalmon is Amharic; but there are many villages where the language of the Falasha is spoken. These are the ancient inhabitants of the mountains, who still preserve the religion, language, and manners of their ancestors, and live in villages by themselves. Their number is now considerably diminished, and this has proportionally lowered their power and spirit. They are now wholly addicted to agriculture, hewers of wood and carriers of water, and the only potters and masons in Abyssinia. In the former profession they excel greatly, and, in general, live better than the other Abyssinians; which these, in revenge, attribute to a skill in magic, not to superior industry. Their villages are generally strongly situated out of the reach of marching armies, otherwise they would be constantly rifled, partly from hatred, and partly from hopes of finding money.

ON the 10th, at half past seven in the morning, we continued along the plain on the top of Lamalmon; it is called Lama; and a village of the same name bore about two miles east from us. At eight o'clock we passed two villages called Mocken, one W. by N. at one mile and a half, the other S. E. two miles distant. At half past eight we crossed the river Macara, a considerable stream running with a very great current, which is the boundary between Woggora and Lamalmon. At nine o'clock we encamped at some small villages called Macara, under a church named Yebous. On the 11th of February, by the meridian altitude of the sun at noon, and that of several fixed stars proper for observation, I found the latitude of Macara to be  $13^{\circ} 6' 8''$ . The ground was everywhere burnt up; and, though the nights were very cold, we had not observed the smallest dew since our first ascend-

ing the mountain. The province of Woggora begins at Macara; it is all plain, and reckoned the granary of Gondar on this side, although the name would denote no such thing, for Woggora signifies the *stony*, or *rocky province*.

THE mountains of Lafta and Belessen bound our view to the south; the hills of Gondar on the S. W.; and all Woggora lies open before us to the south, covered, as I have said before, with grain. But the wheat of Woggora is not good, owing probably to the height of that province. It makes an indifferent bread, and is much less esteemed than that of Foggora and Dembea, low, flat provinces, sheltered with hills, that lie upon the side of the lake Tzana.

ON the 12th we left Macara at seven in the morning, still travelling through the plain of Woggora. At half past seven saw two villages called Erba Tensa, one of them a mile distant, the other half a mile on the N. W. At eight o'clock we came to Woken, five villages not two hundred yards distant from one another. At a quarter past eight we saw five other villages to the S. W. called Warrar, from one to four miles distant, all between the points of east and south. The country now grows inconceivably populous; vast flocks of cattle of all kinds feed on every side, having large and beautiful horns, exceedingly wide, and bosses upon their backs like camels; their colour is mostly black.

At a quarter past eight we passed Arena, a village on our left. At nine we passed the river Girama, which runs N. N. W. and terminates the district of Lamalmon, beginning that of Giram. At ten the church of St George remained on our right, one mile from us; we crossed a river called Shimbra



Shimbra Zuggan, and encamped about two hundred yards from it. The valley of that name is more broken and uneven than any part we had met with since we ascended Lamalmon. The valley called also Shimbra Zuggan, is two miles and a half N. by E. on the top of a hill surrounded with trees. Two small brooks, the one from S. S. E. the other from S. E. join here, then fall into the rivulet.

THE 13th, at seven in the morning, we proceeded still along the plain; at half past seven came to Arradara; and afterwards saw above twenty other villages on our right and left, ruined and destroyed from the lowest foundation by Ras Michael in his late march to Gondar. At half past eight the church of Mariam was about a hundred yards on our left. At ten we encamped under Tamamo. The country here is full of people; the villages are mostly ruined, which, in some places, they are rebuilding. It is wholly sown with grain of different kinds, but more especially with wheat. For the production of this, they have everywhere extirpated the wood, and now labour under a great scarcity of fuel. Since we passed Lamalmon, the only substitute for this was cows and mules dung, which they gather, make into cakes, and dry in the sun. From Addergey hither, salt is the current money, in large purchases, such as sheep or other cattle; cohol, and pepper, for smaller articles, such as flour, butter, fowls, &c. At Shimbra Zuggan they first began to inquire after red Surat cotton cloth for which they offered us thirteen bricks of salt; four pecks of this red cloth are esteemed the price of a goat. We began to find the price of provisions augment in a great proportion as we approached the capital.

THIS day we met several caravans going to Tigré, a certain sign of Michael's victory ; also vast flocks of cattle driven from the rebellious provinces, which were to pasture on Lammalmon, and had been purchased from the army. Not only the country was now more cultivated, but the people were cleaner, better dressed, and apparently better fed, than those in the other parts we had left behind us. Indeed, from Shimbra Zuggan hither, there was not a foot, excepting the path on which we trode, that was not sown with some grain or other.

ON the 14th, at seven o'clock in the morning, we continued our journey. At ten minutes past seven, we had five villages of Tamamo three miles on our left ; our road was through gentle rising hills, all pasture ground. At half past seven, the village of Woggora was three miles on our right ; and at eight, the church of St George a mile on our left, with a village of the same name near it ; and, ten minutes after, Angaba Mariam, a church dedicated to the virgin, so called from the small territory Angaba, which we are now entering. At fifty minutes past eight, we came to five villages called Angaba, at small distances from each other. At nine o'clock we came to Kossogué, and entered a small district of that name. The church is on a hill surrounded with trees. On our left are five villages all called Kossogué, and as it were on a line, the farthest at 3 miles distance ; near ten we came to the church of Argiff, in the midst of many ruined villages. Three miles on our left hand are several others, called Appano.

AFTER having suffered, with infinite patience and perseverance, the hardships and danger of this long and painful  
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journey, at forty minutes past ten we were gratified, at last, with the sight of Gondar, according to my computation about ten miles distant. The king's palace (at least the tower of it) is distinctly seen, but none of the other houses, which are covered by the multitude of wanzey-trees growing in the town, so that it appears one thick, black wood. Behind it is Azazo, likewise covered with trees. On a hill is the large church of Tecla Haimanout, and the river below it makes it distinguishable; still further on is the great lake Tzana, which terminates our horizon.

At forty-five minutes past ten we began to ascend about two miles through a broken road, having on our right, in the valley below, the river Tchagassa; and here begins the territory of that name. At fifty-five minutes past ten, descending still the hill, we passed a large spring of water, called Lambola, together with several plantations of sugar-canes which grow here *from the seed*. At eleven o'clock the village Tchagassa was about half a mile distant from us on our right, on the other side of the river. It is inhabited by Mahometans, as is Waalia, another small one near it. At twelve o'clock we passed the river Tchagassa over a bridge of three arches, the middle of which is Gothic, the two lesser Roman. This bridge, though small, is solid and well cemented, built with stone by order of Facilidas, who probably employed those of his subjects who had retained the arts of the Portuguese, but not their religion.

THE Tchagassa has very steep, rocky banks: It is so deep, though narrow, that, without this bridge, it scarce would be passable. We encamped at a small distance from it, but nearer:

nearer Gondar. Here again we met with trees, (small ones indeed) but the first we had seen since leaving Lamalmon, excepting the usual groves of cedars. It is the Virginia cedar, or oxy-cedros, in this country called *Arx*, with which their churches are constantly furrounded.

ON the 15th, at ten minutes past seven, we began to ascend the mountain; and, at twenty minutes after seven, passed a village on our left. At seven and three quarters we passed Tiba and Mariam, two churches, the one on our right, the other on our left, about half a mile distant; and near them several small villages, inhabited by Falasha, masons and thatchers of houses, employed at Gondar. At half past eight we came to the village Tocutcho, and, in a quarter of an hour, passed the river of that name, and in a few minutes rested on the river Angrab, about half a mile from Gondar.

TCHACASSA is the last of the many little districts which, together, compose Woggora, generally understood to be dependent on Samen, though often, from the turbulent spirit of its chiefs, struggling for independency, as at the present time, but sure to pay for it immediately after. In fact, though large, it is too near Gondar to be suffered to continue in rebellion; and, being rich and well cultivated, it derives its support from the capital, as being the mart of its produce. It is certainly one of the fruitfulest provinces in Abyssinia, but the inhabitants are miserably poor, notwithstanding their threefold harvests. Whereas, in Egypt, beholden to this country alone for its fertility, one moderate harvest gives plenty everywhere,

WOGGORA is full of large ants, and prodigious swarms of rats and mice, which consume immense quantities of grain; to these plagues may be added still one, the greatest of them all, bad government, which speedily destroys all the advantages they reap from nature, climate, and situation.



CHAP.



## CHAP. VIII.

*Reception at Gondar.—Triumphal Entry of the King—The Author's first Audience.*

WE were much surprised at arriving on the Angrab, that no person had come to us from Petros, Janni's brother. We found afterwards, indeed, that he had taken fright upon some menacing words from the priests, at hearing a Frank was on his way to Gondar, and that he had, soon after, set out for Ibaba, where the Ras was, to receive his directions concerning us. This was the most disagreeable accident could have happened to me. I had not a single person to whom I could address myself for any thing. My letters were for the king and Ras Michael, and could be of no use, as both were absent; and though I had others for Petros and the Greeks, they, too, were out of town.

MANY Mahometans came to the Angrab to meet the caravan. They all knew of my coming perfectly, and I soon explained my situation. I had Janni's letters to Negadé Ras Mahomet, the chief of the Moors at Gondar, and principal merchant in Abyssinia, who was absent likewise with the army. But one of his brethren, a sagacious, open-hearted man, desired me not to be discouraged; that, as I had not put off my Moorish dress, I should continue it; that a house was provided for Mahomet Gibberti, and those that were with him, and that he would put me immediately into possession of it, where I might stay, free from any intercourse with the priests, till Petros or the Ras should return to Gondar. This advice I embraced with great readiness, as there was nothing I was so much afraid of as an encounter with fanatical priests before I had obtained some protection from government, or the great people in the country. After having concerted these measures, I resigned myself to the direction of my Moorish friend Hagi Saleh.

We moved along the Angrab, having Gondar on our right situated upon a hill, and the river on our left, proceeding down till its junction with a smaller stream, called the Kahha, that joins it at the Moorish town. This situation, near running water, is always chosen by the Mahometans on account of their frequent ablutions. The Moorish town at Gondar may consist of about 3000 houses, some of them spacious and good. I was put in possession of a very neat one, destined for Mahomet Gibberti. Flour, honey, and such-like food, Mahometans and Christians eat promiscuously, and so far I was well situated. As for flesh, although there was abundance of it, I could not touch a bit of it, being killed by Mahometans, as that communion would have

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been

been looked upon as equal to a renunciation of Christianity.

By Janni's servant, who had accompanied us from Adowa, his kind and friendly master had wrote to Ayto Aylo, of whom I have already spoken. He was the constant patron of the Greeks, and had been so also of all the Catholics who had ventured into this country, and been forced after to leave it. Though no man professed greater veneration for the priesthood, no one privately detested more those of his own country than he did; and he always pretended that, if a proper way of going to Jerusalem could be found, he would leave his large estates, and the rank he had in Abyssinia, and, with the little money he could muster, live the remaining part of his days among the monks, of whom he had now accounted himself one, in the convent of the holy sepulchre. This perhaps was, great part of it, imagination; but, as he had talked himself into a belief that he was to end his days either at Jerusalem, which was a pretence, or at Rome, which was his inclination, he willingly took the charge of white people of all communions who had hitherto been unhappy enough to stray into Abyssinia.

It was about seven o'clock at night, of the 15th, when Hagi Saleh was much alarmed by a number of armed men at his door; and his surprise was still greater upon seeing Ayto Aylo, who, as far as I know, was never in the Moorish town before, descend from his mule, and uncover his head and shoulders, as if he had been approaching a person of the first distinction. I had been reading the prophet Enoch, which Janni had procured me at Adowa; and Wemmer's  
and



and Ludolf's dictionaries were lying upon it. Yafine was sitting by me, and was telling me what news he had picked up, and he was well acquainted with Ayto Aylo, from several commissions he had received for his merchants in Arabia. A contention of civilities immediately followed. I offered to stand till Aylo was covered, and he would not sit till I was seated. This being got over, the first curiosity was, What my books were ? and he was very much astonished at seeing one of them was Abyssinian, and the European helps that I had towards understanding it. He understood Tigrè and Amharic perfectly, and had a little knowledge of Arabic, that is, he understood it when spoken, for he could neither read nor write it, and spoke it very ill, being at a loss for words.

THE beginning of our discourse was in Arabic, and embarrassed enough, but we had plenty of interpreters in all languages. The first bashfulness being removed on both sides, our conversation began in Tigrè, now, lately since Michael had become Ras, the language most used in Gondar. Aylo was exceedingly astonished at hearing me speak the language as I did, and said after, "The Greeks are poor creatures ; Peter does not speak Tigré so well as this man." Then, very frequently, to Saleh and the by-standers, "Come, come, he'll do, if he can speak ; there is no fear of him, he'll make his way."

HE told us that Welled Hawaryat had come from the camp ill of a fever, and that they were afraid it was the small pox : that Janni had informed them I had saved many young people's lives at Adowa, by a new manner of treating them ; and that the Iteghé desired I would come the

next morning, and that he should carry me to Koscam and introduce me to her. I told him that I was ready to be directed by his good advice; that the absence of the Greeks, and Mahomet Gibberti at the same time, had very much distressed me, and especially the apprehensions of Petros. He said, smiling, That neither Petros nor himself were bad men, but that unfortunately they were great cowards, and things were not always so bad as they apprehended. What had frightened Petros, was a conversation of Abba Salama, whom they met at Koscam, expressing his displeasure with some warmth, that a Frank, meaning me, was permitted to come to Gondar. "But," says Ayto Aylo, "we shall hear tomorrow, or next day. Ras Michael and Abba Salama, are not friends; and if you could do any good to Welled Hawaryat his son, I shall answer for it, one word of his will stop the mouths of a hundred Abba Salamas." I will not trouble the reader with much indifferent conversation that passed. He drank capillaire and water, and sat till past midnight.

ABBA SALAMA, of whom we shall often speak, at that time filled the post of Acab Saat, or guardian of the fire. It is the third dignity of the church, and he is the first religious officer in the palace. He had a very large revenue, and still a greater influence. He was a man exceedingly rich, and of the very worst life possible; though he had taken the vows of poverty and chastity, it was said he had at that time above seventy mistresses in Gondar. His way of seducing women was as extraordinary as the number seduced. It was not by gifts, attendance, or flattery, the usual means employed on such occasions; when he had fixed his desires upon a woman, he forced her to comply, under pain

of *excommunication*. He was exceedingly eloquent and bold, a great favourite of the Iteghé's, till taken in to be a counsellor with Lubo and Brulhé. He had been very instrumental in the murder of Kasmati Elshrè, of which he vaunted, even in the palace of the queen his sister. He was a man of a pleasing countenance, short, and of a very fair complexion; indifferent, or rather averse to wine, but a monstrous glutton, nice in what he had to eat, to a degree scarcely before known in Abyssinia; a mortal enemy to all white people, whom he classed under the name of Franks, for which the Greeks, uniting their interests at favourable times, had often very nearly overset him.

THE next morning, about ten o'clock, taking Hagi Saleh and Yafine with me, and dressed in my Moorish dress, I went to Ayto Aylo, and found him with several great plates of bread, melted butter, and honey, before him, of one of which he and I ate; the rest were given to the Moors, and other people present. There was with him a priest of Kofcam, and we all set out for that palace as soon as we had finished breakfast. The rest of the company were on mules. I had mounted my own favourite horse. Aylo, before his fright at Sennaar, was one of the first horsemen in Abyssinia; he was short, of a good figure, and knew the advantage of such make for a horseman; he had therefore a curiosity to see a tall man ride; but he was an absolute stranger to the great advantage of Moorish furniture, bridle, spurs, and stirrups, in the management of a violent, strong, high-metled horse; it was with the utmost satisfaction, when we arrived in the plain called Aylo Meydan, that I shewed him the different paces of the horse. He cried out with fear  
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when he saw him stand upright upon his legs, and jump forward, or aside, with all four feet off the ground.

WE passed the brook of St Raphael, a suburb of Gondar, where is the house of the Abuna ; and upon coming in sight of the palace of Koscam, we all uncovered our heads, and rode slowly. As Aylo was all-powerful with the Iteghé, indeed her first counsellor and friend, our admittance was easy and immediate. We alighted, and were shewn into a low room in the palace. Ayto Aylo went immediately to the queen to inquire about Welled Hawaryat, and his audience lasted two long hours. He returned to us with these news, that Welled Hawaryat was much better, by a medicine a faint from Waldubba had given him, which consisted in some characters written with common ink upon a tin plate, which characters were washed off by a medicinal liquor, and then given him to drink. It was agreed, however, that the complaint was the small-pox, and the good it had done him was, he had ate heartily of *brind*, or raw beef after it, tho' he had not ate before since his arrival, but called perpetually for drink. Aylo said he was to remain at Koscam till towards evening, and desired me to meet him at his own house when it turned dark, and to bring Petros with me, if he was returned.

PETROS was returned when I arrived, and waited for me at Hagi Saleh's house. Although he shewed all the signs of my being welcome, yet it was easy to read in his countenance he had not succeeded according to his wish in his interview with Michael, or that he had met something that had ruffled and frightened him anew. And, indeed, this last was the case, for going to the Ras's tent, he had seen the stuffed skin

of the unfortunate Woosheka, with whom he was well acquainted, swinging upon a tree, and drying in the wind. He was so terrified, and struck with such horror, at the sight, that he was in a kind of hysteric fit, cried, started, laughed hideously, and seemed as if he had in part lost his senses.

I WAS satisfied by the state I saw him in, though he had left Ibaba three days, that, as the first sight of Woosheka's stuffed skin must have been immediately before he went to the Ras, he could not have had any distinct or particular conversation with him on my account; and it turned out after, that he had not spoken one word upon the subject from fear, but had gone to the tent of Negadé Ras Mahomet, who carried him to Kefla Yafous; that they, too, seeing the fright he was in, and knowing the cause, had gone without him to the Ras, and told him of my arrival, and of the behaviour of Abba Salama, and my fear thereupon, and that I was then in the house of Hagi Saleh, in the Moorish town. The Ras's answer was, "Abba Salama is an ass, and they that fear him are worse. Do I command in Gondar only when I stay there? My dog is of more consequence in Gondar than Abba Salama." And then, after pausing a little, he said, "Let Yagoube stay where he is in the Moors town: Saleh will let no priests trouble him there." Negadé Ras Mahomet laughed, and said, "We will answer for that;" and Petros set out immediately upon his return, haunted night and day with the ghost of his friend Woosheka, but without having seen Ras Michael.

I THOUGHT, when we went at night to Ayto Aylo, and Petros had told the story distinctly, that Aylo and he were equally afraid, for he had not, or pretended he had not, till then

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heard

heard that Woosheka had been flayed alive. Aylo, too, was well acquainted with the unfortunate person, and only said, "This is Esther, this is Esther; nobody knew her but I." Then they went on to inquire particulars, and after, they would stop one another, and desire each other to speak no more; then they cried again, and fell into the same conversation. It was impossible not to laugh at the ridiculous dialogue. "Sirs," said I, "you have told me all I want; I shall not stir from the Moors town till Ras Michael arrives; if there was any need of advice, you are neither of you capable of giving it; now I would wish you would shew me you are capable of taking mine. You are both extremely agitated, and Peter is very tired; and will besides see the ghost of Woosheka shaking to and fro all night with the wind: neither of you ate supper, as I intend to do; and I think Peter should stay here all night, but you should not lie both of you in the same room, where Woosheka's black skin, so strongly impressed on your mind, will not fail to keep you talking all night in place of sleeping. Boil about a quart of gruel, I will put a few drops into it; go then to bed, and this unusual operation of Michael will not have power to keep you awake."

THE gruel was made, and a good large doze of laudanum put into it. I took my leave, and returned with Saleh; but before I went to the door Aylo told me he had forgot Welled Hawaryat was very bad, and the Iteghé, Ozoro Altafsh, his wife, and Ozoro Esther, desired I would come and see him to-morrow. One of his daughters, by Ozoro Altafsh, had been ill some time before his arrival, and she too was thought in great danger. "Look," said I, "Ayto Aylo, the small-pox is a disease that will have its course; and, during  
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the long time the patient is under it, if people feed them and treat them according to their own ignorant prejudices, my seeing him, or advising him, is in vain. This morning you said a man had cured him by writing upon a tin plate; and to try if he was well, they crammed him with raw beef, I do not think the letters that he swallowed will do him any harm, neither will they do him any good; but I shall not be surprised if the raw beef kills him, and his daughter Welleta Selaffé, too, before I see him to-morrow."

ON the morrow Petros was really taken ill, and feverish, from a cold and fatigue, and fright. Aylo and I went to Koscam, and, for a fresh amusement to him, I shewed him the manner in which the Arabs use their firelocks on horse-back; but with this advantage of a double-barrelled gun, which he had never before seen. I shot also several birds from the horse; all which things he would have pronounced impossible if they had been only told him. He arrived at Koscam full of wonder, and ready to believe I was capable of doing every thing I undertook.

We were just entering into the palace-door, when we saw a large procession of monks, with the priests of Koscam at their head, a large cross and a picture carried with them, the last in a very dirty, gilt frame. Aylo turned aside when he saw these; and, going into the chamberlain's apartment, called Ayto Heikel, afterwards a great friend and companion of mine. He informed us, that three great saints from Waldubba, one of whom had neither ate nor drank for twenty years of his life, had promised to come and cure Welled Hawaryat, by laying a picture of the Virgin Mary and the cross upon him, and therefore they would not wish

me to be seen, or meddle in the affair. "I assure you, Ayto Aylo," said I, "I shall strictly obey you. There is no sort of reason for my meddling in this affair with such associates. If they can cure him by a miracle, I am sure it is the easiest kind of cure of any, and will not do his constitution the least harm afterwards, which is more than I will promise for medicines in general; but, remember what I say to you, it will, indeed, be a miracle, if both the father and the daughter are not dead before to-morrow night." We seemed all of us satisfied in one point, that it was better he should die, than I come to trouble by interfering.

AFTER the procession was gone, Aylo went to the Iteghé, and, I suppose, told her all that happened since he had seen her last. I was called in, and, as usual, prostrated myself upon the ground. She received that token of respect without offering to excuse or to decline it. Aylo then said, "This is our gracious mistress, who always gives us her assistance and protection. You may safely say before her whatever is in your heart."

OUR first discourse was about Jérusalem, the Holy Sepulchre, Calvary, the City of David, and the Mountain of Olives; with the situations of which she was perfectly well acquainted. She then asked me to tell her truly if I was not a Frank? "Madam," said I, "If I was a Catholic, which you mean by Frank, there could be no greater folly than my concealing this from you in the beginning, after the assurance Ayto Aylo has just now given; and, in confirmation of the truth I am now telling, (she had a large bible lying on the table before her, upon which I laid my hand), I declare to you, by all those truths contained in this book, that my religion is  
more



more different from the Catholic religion than your's is : that there has been more blood shed between the Catholics and us, on account of the difference of religion, than ever was between you and the Catholics in this country ; even at this day, when men are become wiser and cooler in many parts of the world, it would be full as safe for a Jesuit to preach in the market-place of Gondar, as for any priest of my religion to present himself as a teacher in the most civilized of Frank or Catholic countries."—"How is it then," says she, "that you don't believe in miracles?"

"I see, Madam," said I, "Ayto Aylo has informed you of a few words that some time ago dropt from me. I do certainly believe the miracles of Christ and his apostles, otherwise I am no Christian ; but I do not believe these miracles of latter times, wrought upon trifling occasions, like sports, and jugglers tricks."—"And yet," says she, "our books are full of them."—"I know they are," said I, "and so are those of the Catholics: but I never can believe that a saint converted the devil, who lived, forty years after, a holy life as a monk ; nor the story of another saint, who, being sick and hungry, caused a brace of partridges, ready-roasted, to fly upon his plate that he might eat them."—"He has been reading the Synaxar," says Ayto Aylo. "I believe so," says she, smiling; "but is there any harm in believing too much, and is not there great danger in believing too little?"—"Certainly," continued I; "but what I meant to say to Ayto Aylo was, that I did not believe laying a picture upon Welled Hawaryat would recover him when delirious in a fever." She answered, "There was nothing impossible with God." I made a bow of assent, wishing heartily the conversation might end there.

I RETURNED to the Moors town, leaving Aylo with the queen. In the afternoon I heard Welleta Selassé was dead; and at night died her father, Welled Hawaryat. The contagion from Masuah and Adowa had spread itself all over Gondar. Ozoro Ayabdar, daughter of Ozoro Altafsh, was now sick, and a violent fever had fallen upon Koscam. The next morning Aylo came to me and told me, the faith in the saint who did not eat or drink for twenty years was perfectly abandoned since Welled Hawaryat's death: That it was the desire of the queen, and Ozoro Esthier, that I should transport myself to Koscam to the Iteghé's palace, where all their children and grandchildren, by the different men the queen's daughters had married, were under her care. I told him, "I had some difficulty to obey them, from the positive orders I had received from Petros to stay in the Moors town with Hagi Saleh till the Ras should arrive; that Koscam was full of priests, and Abba Salama there every day; notwithstanding which, if Petros and he so advised me, I would certainly go to do any possible service to the Iteghé, or Ozoro Esthier."

HE desired half an hour's absence before he gave me an answer, but did not return till about three hours afterwards, and, without alighting, cried out at some distance, "Aya, come, you must go immediately." "I told him, that new and clean clothes in the Gondar fashion had been procured for me by Petros, and that I wished they might be sent to his house, where I would put them on, and then go to Koscam, with a certainty that I carried no infection with me, for I had attended a number of Moorish children, while at Hagi Saleh's house, most of whom happily went on doing well, but that there was no doubt there would be infection

in my clothes." He praised me up to the skies for this precaution, and the whole was executed in the manner proposed. My hair was cut round, curled, and perfumed, in the Amharic fashion, and I was thenceforward, in all outward appearance, a perfect Abyssinian.

My first advice, when arrived at Koscam, was, that Ozoro Esther, and her son by Mariam Barea, and a son by Ras Michael, should remove from the palace, and take up their lodging in a house formerly belonging to her uncle Basil Eusebius, and give the part of the family that were yet well a chance of escaping the disease. Her young son by Mariam Barea, however, complaining, the Iteghè would not suffer him to remove, and the resolution was taken to abide the issue all in the palace together.

BEFORE I entered upon my charge, I desired Petros (now recovered) Aylo, Abba Christophorus, a Greek priest who acted as physician before I came to Gondar, and Armaxikos, priest of Koscam, and favourite of the Iteghè, to be all present. I stated to them the disagreeable task now imposed upon me, a stranger without acquaintance or protection, having the language but imperfectly, and without power or controul among them. I professed my intention of doing my utmost, although the disease was much more serious and fatal in this country than in mine, but I insisted one condition should be granted me, which was, that no directions as to regimen or management, even of the most trifling kind, as they might think, should be suffered, without my permission and superintendence, otherwise I washed my hands of the consequence, which I told before them would be fatal. They all assented to this, and Armaxikos declared those excommunicated.

nicated that broke this promise; and I saw that, the more scrupulous and particular I was, the more the confidence of the ladies increased. Armaxikos promised me the assistance of his prayers, and those of the whole monks, morning and evening; and Aylo said lowly to me, "You'll have no objection to this faint, I assure you he eats and drinks heartily, as I shall shew you when once these troubles are over."

I SET the servants all to work. There were apartments enough. I opened all the doors and windows, fumigating them with incense and myrrh, in abundance, washed them with warm water and vinegar, and adhered strictly to the rules which my worthy and skilful friend Doctor-Russel had given me at Aleppo.

THE common and fatal regimen in this country, and in most parts in the east, has been to keep their patient from feeling the smallest breath of air; hot drink, a fire, and a quantity of covering are added in Abyssinia, and the doors shut so close as even to keep the room in darkness, whilst this heat is further augmented by the constant burning of candles.

AYABDAR, Ozoro Altash's remaining daughter, and the son of Mariam Barea, were both taken ill at the same time, and happily recovered. A daughter of Kasmati Boro, by a daughter of Kasmati Eshtès, died, and her mother, though she survived, was a long time ill afterwards. Ayabdar was very much marked, so was Mariam Barea's son.

AT this time, Ayto Confu, son of Kasmati Netcho by Ozoro Esther, had arrived from Tcherkin, a lad of very

great hopes, though not then fourteen. He came to see his mother without my knowledge or her's, and was infected likewise. Last of all the infant child of Michael, the child of his old age, took the disease, and though the weakest of all the children, recovered best. I tell these actions for brevity's sake altogether, not directly in the order they happened, to satisfy the reader about the reason of the remarkable attention and favour shewed to me afterwards upon so short an acquaintance.

THE fear and anxiety of Ozoro Esther, upon smaller occasions, was excessive, and fully in proportion in the greater that now existed; many promises of Michael's favour, of riches, greatness, and protection, followed every instance of my care and attention towards my patients. She did not eat or sleep herself; and the ends of her fingers were all broke out into pustules, from touching the several sick persons. Confu, the favourite of all the queen's relations, and the hopes of their family, had symptoms which all feared would be fatal, as he had violent convulsions, which were looked upon as forerunners of immediate death; they ceased, however, immediately on the eruption. The attention I shewed to this young man, which was more than overpaid by the return he himself made on many occasions afterwards, was greatly owing to a prepossession in his favour; which I took upon his first appearance. Policy, as may be imagined, as well as charity, alike influenced me in the care of my other patients; but an attachment, which providence seemed to have inspired me with for my own preservation, had the greatest share in my care for Ay-to Confu.

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THOUGH it is not the place, I must not forget to tell the reader, that, the third day after I had come to Koscam, a horseman and a letter had arrived from Michael to Hagi Saleh, ordering him to carry me to Koscam, and likewise a short letter written to me by Negadè Ras Mahomet, in Arabic, as from Ras Michael, very civil, but containing positive orders and *command*, as if to a servant, that I should repair to the Iteghè's palace, and not stir from thence till future orders, upon any pretence whatever..

I CANNOT say but this positive, peremptory dealing, did very much shock and displease me. I shewed the letter to Petros, who approved of it much; said he was glad to see it in that stile, as it was a sign the Ras was in earnest. I shewed it to Ayto Aylo, who said not much to it either the one way or the other, only he was glad that I had gone to Koscam before it came; but he taxed Ozoro Efther with being the cause of a proceeding which might have been proper to a Greek or slave, but was not so to a free man like me, who came recommended to their protection, and had, as yet, received no favour, or even civility. Ozoro Efther laughed heartily at all this, for the first time she had shewn any inclination to mirth; she confessed she had sent a messenger every day, sometimes two, and sometimes three, ever since Welled Hawaryat had died, and by every one of them she had pressed the Ras to enjoin me not to leave Koscam, the consequence of which was the order above mentioned; and, in the evening, there was a letter to Petros from Anthulé, Janni's son-in-law, a Greek, and treasurer to the king, pretty much to the same purpose as the first, and in no softer terms, with direction, however, to furnish me with every thing I should want, on the king's account.

ONE morning Aylo, in presence of the queen, speaking to Ozoro Esther of the stile of the Ras's letter to me, she confessed her own anxiety was the cause, but added, " You have often upbraided me with being, what you call, an unchristian enemy, in the advices you suppose I frequently give Michael ; but now, if I am not as good a friend to Yagoube, who has saved my children, as I am a steady enemy to the Galla, who murdered my husband, say then Esther is not a Christian, and I forgive you." Many conversations of this kind passed between her and me, during the illness of Ayto Confu. I removed my bed to the outer door of Confu's chamber, to be ready whenever he should call, but his mother's anxiety kept her awake in his room all night, and propriety did not permit me to go to bed. From this frequent communication began a friendship between Ozoro Esther and me, which ever after subsisted without any interruption.

OUR patients, being all likely to do well, were removed to a large house of Kafmati Eshté, which stood still within the boundaries of Koscam, while the rooms underwent another lustration and fumigation, after which they all returned ; and I got, as my fee, a present of the neat and convenient house formerly belonging to Bascha Eusebius, which had a separate entry, without going through the palace. Still I thought it better to obey Ras Michael's orders to the letter, and not stir out of Koscam, not even to Hagi Saleh's or Ayto Aylo's, though both of them frequently endeavoured to persuade me that the order had no such strict meaning. But my solitude was in no way disagreeable to me. I had a great deal to do. I mounted my instruments, my thermometer and barometer, telescopes and quadrant.

Again all was wonder. It occasioned me many idle hours before the curiosity of the palace was satisfied. I saw the queen once every day at her levee, sometimes in the evening, where many priests were always present. I was, for the most part, twice a-day, morning and evening, with Ozo-ro Esther, where I seldom met with any.

ONE day, when I went early to the queen, that I might get away in time, having some other engagements about noon, just as I was taking my leave, in came Abba Salama. At first he did not know me from the change of dress; but, soon after recollecting me, he said, as it were, passing, "Are you here? I thought you was with Ras Michael." I made him no answer, but bowed, and took my leave; when he called out, with an air of authority, Come back, and beckoned me with his hand.

SEVERAL people entered the room at that instant, and I stood still in the same place where I was, ready to receive the Iteghé's orders: she said, "Come back, and speak to Abba Salama." I then advanced a few paces forward, and said, looking to the Iteghé, "What has Abba Salama to say to me?" He began directing his discourse to the queen, "Is he a priest? Is he a priest?" The Iteghé answered very gravely, "Every good man is a priest to himself; in that sense, and no other, Yagoube is a priest."—"Will you answer a question that I will ask you?" says he to me, with a very pert tone of voice. "I do not know but I may, if it is a discreet one," said I, in Tigré. "Why don't you speak Amharic?" says he to me in great haste, or seeming impatience. "Because I cannot speak it well," said I. "Why don't you, on the other hand, speak Tigré to me? it is the language the



the holy scriptures are written in, and you, a priest, should understand it.”—“That is Geez,” says he; “I understand it, though I don’t speak it.”—“Then,” replied I, “Ayto Heikel,” the queen’s chamberlain, who stood behind me, “shall interpret for us; he understands all languages.”

“Ask him, Heikel,” says he, “how many Natures there are in Christ.” Which being repeated to me, I said, “I thought the question to be put was something relating to my country, travels, or profession, in which I possibly could instruct him; and not belonging to his, in which he should instruct me. I am a physician in the town, a horseman and foldier in the field. Physic is my study in the one, and managing my horse and arms in the other. This I was bred to; as for disputes and matters of religion, they are the province of priests and schoolmen. I profess myself much more ignorant in these than I ought to be. Therefore, when I have doubts I propose them to some holy man like you, Abba Salama, (he bowed for the first time) whose profession these things are. He gives me a rule and I implicitly follow it.” “Truth! truth!” says he; “by St Michael, prince of angels; that is right; it is answered well; by St George! he is a clever fellow. They told me he was a Jesuit. Will you come to see me? Will you come to see me? You need not be afraid when you come to me.” “I trust,” said I, bowing, “I shall do no ill, in that case shall have no reason to fear.” Upon this I withdrew from among the crowd, and went away, as an express then arrived from Ras Michael.

It was on the 8th or 9th of March I met him at Azazo. He was dressed in a coarse dirty cloth, wrapt about him like a blanket, and another like a table-cloth folded about his

head: He was lean, old, and apparently much fatigued; sat stooping upon an excellent mule, that carried him speedily without shaking him; he had also fore eyes. As we saw the place where he was to light by four cross lances, and a cloth thrown over them like a temporary tent, upon an eminence, we did not speak to him till he alighted. Petros and the Greek priest, besides servants, were the only people with me, Francis \* had joined us upon our meeting the Ras.

We alighted at the same time he did, and afterwards, with anxiety enough we deputed the Greek priest, who was a friend of Michael, to tell him who I was, and that I was come to meet him. The soldiers made way, and I came up, took him by the hand, and kissed it. He looked me broad in the face for a second, repeated the ordinary salutation in Tigrè. "How do you do? I hope you are well;" and pointed to a place where I was to sit down. A thousand complaints, and a thousand orders came immediately before him, from a thousand mouths, and we were nearly smothered; but he took no notice of me, nor did he ask for one of his family. In some minutes after came the king, who passed at some distance to the left of him; and Michael was then led out of the shelter of his tent to the door, where he was supported on foot till the king passed by, having first pulled off the rowel that was upon his head, after which he returned to his seat in the tent again.

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\* A man much attached to Michael, and had been preferred by him to many commands, and consequently was the only Greek that could be called a good foldier.

THE king had been past about a quarter of a mile, when Kefla Yafous came from him with orders to the Ras, or rather, as I believe, to receive orders from him. He brought with him a young nobleman, Ayto Engedan, who, by his dress, having his upper garment twisted in a particular manner about his waist, shewed that he was carrier of a special message from the king. The crowd by this time had shut us quite out, and made a circle round the Ras, in which we were not included. We were upon the point of going away, when Kefla Yafous, who had seen Francis, said to him, "I think Engedan has the king's command for you, you must not depart without leave." And, soon after, we understood that the king's orders were to obtain leave from the Ras, to bring me, with Engedan, near, and in sight of him, without letting me know, or introducing me to him. In answer to this, the Ras had said, "I dont know him; will people like him think this right? Ask Petros; or why should not the king call upon him and speak to him; he has letters to him as well as to me, and he will be obliged to see him to-morrow."

ENGEDAN went away on a gallop to join the king, and we proceeded after him, nor did we receive any other message either from the king or the Ras. We returned to Koscam, very little pleased with the reception we had met with. All the town was in a hurry and confusion; 30,000 men were encamped upon the Kahha; and the first horrid scene Michael exhibited there, was causing the eyes of twelve of the chiefs of the Galla, whom he had taken prisoners, to be pulled out, and the unfortunate sufferers turned out to the fields, to be devoured at night by the hyæna. Two of these

I took under my care, who both recovered, and from them I learned many particulars of their country and manners.

THE next day, which was the 10th, the army marched into the town in triumph, and the Ras at the head of the troops of Tigrè. He was bareheaded; over his shoulders, and down to his back, hung a pallium, or cloak, of black velvet, with a silver fringe. A boy, by his right stirrup, held a silver wand of about five feet and a half long, much like the staves of our great officers at court. Behind him all the soldiers, who had slain an enemy and taken the spoils from them, had their lances and firelocks ornamented with small shreds of scarlet cloth, one piece for every man he had slain.

REMARKABLE among all this multitude was Hagos, door-keeper of the Ras, whom we have mentioned in the war of Begemder. This man, always well-armed and well-mounted, had followed the wars of the Ras from his infancy, and had been so fortunate in this kind of single combat, that his whole lance and javelin, horse and person, were covered over with the shreds of scarlet cloth. At this last battle of Fagitta, Hagos is said to have slain eleven men with his own hand. Indeed there is nothing more fallacious than judging of a man's courage by these marks of conquests. A good horseman, armed with a coat of mail, upon a strong, well-fed, well-winded horse, may, after a defeat, kill as many of these wretched, weary, naked fugitives, as he pleases, confining himself to those that are weakly, mounted upon tired horses, and covered only with goat's-skins, or that are flying on foot.

BEHIND came Gufho of Amhara, and Powuffen, lately made governor of Begemder for his behaviour at the battle of Fagitta, where, as I have said, he pursued Fasil and his army for two days. The Ras had given him also a farther reward; his grand-daughter Ayabdar, lately recovered from the small-pox, and the only one of my patients that, neither by herself, her mother, nor her husband, ever made me the least return. Powuffen was one of the twelve officers who, after being delivered to Lubo by the Galla, together with Mariam Barea, had fled to Michael's tent, and were protected by him.

ONE thing remarkable in this cavalcade, which I observed, was the head-dress of the governors of provinces. A large broad fillet was bound upon their forehead, and tied behind their head. In the middle of this was a horn, or a conical piece of silver, gilt, about four inches long, much in the shape of our common candle extinguishers. This is called *kirn*, or horn, and is only worn in reviews or parades after victory. This I apprehend, like all other of their usages, is taken from the Hebrews, and the several allusions made in scripture to it arise from this practice:—"I said unto fools, Deal not foolishly; and to the wicked, Lift not up the horn—"Lift not up your horn on high; speak not with a stiff neck\*"—"For promotion cometh," &c.—"But my horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn"—"And the horn

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\* The crooked manner in which they hold their neck when this ornament is on their forehead, for fear it should fall forward, perfectly shews the meaning of speaking with a stiff neck when you hold the horn on high, or erect like the horn of the unicorn.

horn of the righteous shall be exalted with honour." And so in many other places throughout the Psalms.

NEXT to these came the king, with a fillet of white muslin about three inches broad, binding his forehead, tied with a large double knot behind, and hanging down about two feet on his back. About him were the great officers of state, such of the young nobility as were without command; and after these, the household troops.

THEN followed the Kanitz Kitzera, or executioner of the camp, and his attendants; and, last of all, amidst the King's and the Ras's baggage, came a man bearing the stuffed skin of the unfortunate Woosheka upon a pole, which he hung upon a branch of the tree before the king's palace appropriated for public executions.

UPON their arrival at Gondar, all the great men had waited both upon the Ras and the King. Aylo had been with them, and Ozoro Esther was removed to Gondar; but, by my advice, had left the child at Koscam. Her son Confu, though recovered of the small-pox, had evident signs of a dysentery, and took no care of himself in point of regimen, or avoiding cold.

It was now the 13th of March, and I had heard no word from Ozoro Esther, or the Ras, though removed to a house in Gondar near to Petros. I had gone every day once to see the children of Koscam; at all which times I had been received with the greatest cordiality and marks of kindness by the Iteghe, and orders given for my free admittance upon all occasions like an officer of her household. As to the rest, I never

I never was in appearance more neglected, than in this present moment, by all but the Moors. These were very grateful for the successful attention I had shewed their children, and very desirous to have me again among them. Hagi Saleh, in particular, could not satiate himself with cursing the ingratitude of these casers, and infidels, the Christians. He knew what had passed at Koscam, he saw what he thought likely to happen now, and his anger was that of an honest man, and which perhaps many former instances which he had been witness of might have justified, but in the present one he was mistaken.

IN the evening, Negadè Ras Mahoment came to my house; he said Mahomet Gibberti was arrived, had been twice on private business with the Ras, but had not yet delivered him his presents; and he had not informed me of this, as he thought I was still at Koscam, and that Saleh his brother knew nothing of it, as he had not seen him since he came home. He also informed me that Ayto Aylo was with the Ras twice the day after he entered Gondar, and once with Mahomet Gibberti: all this was about me; and that, at Ayto Aylo's proposal, it was agreed that I should be appointed Palambaras, which is master of the king's horse. It is a very great office, both for rank, and revenue, but has no business attending it; the young Armenian had before enjoyed it. I told Mahomet, that, far from being any kindness to me, this would make me the most unhappy of all creatures; that my extreme desire was to see the country, and its different natural productions; to converse with the people as a stranger, but to be nobody's master nor servant; to see their books; and, above all, to visit the sources of the Nile; to live as privately in my own house, and have as  
much

much time to myself as possible ; and what I was most anxious about at present, was to know when it would be convenient for them to admit me to see the Ras, and deliver my letters as a stranger.

MAHOMET went away, and returned, bringing Mahomet Gibberti, who told me, that, besides the letter I carried to Ras Michael from Metical Aga his master, he had been charged with a particular one, out of the ordinary form, dictated by the English at Jidda, who, all of them, and particularly my friends Captain Thornhill, and Capt. Thomas Price of the Lyon, had agreed to make a point with Metical Aga, devoted to them for his own profit, that his utmost exertion of friendship and interest, should be so employed in my recommendation, as to engage the attention of Ras Michael to provide in earnest for my safety and satisfaction in every point.

THIS letter I had myself read at Jidda ; it informed Michael of the power and riches of our nation, and that they were absolute masters of the trade on the Red Sea, and strictly connected with the Sherriffe; and in a very particular manner with him, Metical Aga ; that any accident happening to me would be an infamy and disgrace to him, and worse than death itself, because, that knowing Michael's power, and relying on his friendship, he had become security for my safety, after I arrived in his hands ; that I was a man of consideration in my own country, servant to the king of it, who, though himself a Christian, governed his subjects Mussulmen and Pagans, with the same impartiality and justice as he did Christians. That all my desire was to examine springs and rivers, trees and flowers, and the stars in the heavens,



heavens, from which I drew knowledge very useful to preserve man's health and life; that I was no merchant, and had no dealings whatever in any sort of mercantile matters; and that I had no need of any man's money, as he had told Mahomet Gibberti to provide for any call I might have in that country, and for which he would answer, let the sum be what it would, as he had the word of my countrymen to repay it, which he considered better than the written security of any other people in the world. He then repeated very nearly the same words used in the beginning of the letter; and, upon this particular request, Metical Aga had sent him a distinct present, not to confound it with other political and commercial affairs, in which they were concerned together.

UPON reading this letter, Michael exclaimed, "Metical Aga does not know the situation of this country. Safety! where is that to be found? I am obliged to fight for my own life every day. Will Metical call this safety? Who knows, at this moment, if the king is in safety, or how long I shall be so? All I can do is to keep him with me. If I lose my own life, and the king's, Metical Aga can never think it was in my power to preserve that of his stranger."—"No, no," says Ayto Aylo, who was then present, "you don't know the man; he is a devil on horseback; he rides better, and shoots better, than any man that ever came into Abyssinia; lose no time, put him about the king, and there is no fear of him. He is very sober and religious; he will do the king good. "Shoot!" says Michael, "he won't shoot at me as the Armenian did; will he? will he?" "Oh," continued Aylo, "you know these days are over. What is the Armenian? a boy, a slave to the Turk. When you see this man, you'll not think

think of the Armenian." It was finally agreed, that the letters the Greeks had received should be read to the king; that the letters I had from Metical Aga to the Ras should be given to Mahomet Gibberti, and that I should be introduced to the King and the Ras immediately after they were ready.

THE reader may remember that, when I was at Cairo, I obtained letters from Mark, the Greek patriarch, to the Greeks at Gondar; and particularly one, in form of a bull, or rescript, to all the Greeks in Abyssinia. In this, after a great deal of pastoral admonition, the patriarch said, that, knowing their propensity to lying and vanity, and not being at hand to impose proper penances upon them for these sins, he exacted from them, as a proof of their obedience, that they would, with a good grace, undergo this mortification, than which there could be no gentler imposed, as it was only to speak the truth. He ordered them in a body to go to the king, in the manner and time they knew best, and to inform him that I was not to be confounded with the rest of white men, such as Greeks, who were all subject to the Turks, and slaves; but that I was a free man, of a free nation; and the best of them would be happy in being my servant, as one of their brethren, Michael, then actually was. I will not say but this was a bitter pill; for they were high in office, all except Petros, who had declined all employment after the murder of Joas his master, whose chamberlain he was. The order of the patriarch, however, was fairly and punctually performed; Petros was their spokesman; he was originally a shoemaker at Rhodes, clever, and handsome in his person, but a great coward, though, on such an occasion as the present, forward and capable enough.

I THINK it was about the 14th that these letters were to be all read. I expected at the ordinary hour, about five in the afternoon, to be sent for, and had rode out to Koscam with Ayto Heikel, the queen's chamberlain, to see the child, who was pretty well recovered of all its complaints, but very weak. In the interim I was sent for to the Ras, with orders to dispatch a man with the king's present, to wait for me at the palace, whither I was to go after leaving Michael. It was answered, That I was at Koscam, and the errand I had gone on mentioned; which disappointment, and the cause, did no way prejudice me with the Ras. Five in the evening was fixed as the hour, and notice sent to Koscam. I came a little before the time, and met Ayto Aylo at the door. He squeezed me by the hand, and said, "Refuse nothing, it can be all altered afterwards; but it is very necessary, on account of the priests and the populace, you have a place of some authority, otherwise you will be robbed and murdered the first time you go half a mile from home: fifty people have told me you have chests filled with gold, and that you can make gold, or bring what quantity you please from the Indies; and the reason of all this is, because you refused the queen and Ozoro Esther's offer of gold at Koscam, and which you must never do again."

WE went in and saw the old man sitting upon a sofa; his white hair was dressed in many short curls. He appeared to be thoughtful, but not displeased; his face was lean, his eyes quick and vivid, but seemed to be a little sore from exposure to the weather. He seemed to be about six feet high, though his lameness made it difficult to guess with accuracy. His air was perfectly free from constraint, what the French call *degagé*. In face and person he was  
liker:

liker my learned and worthy friend, the Count de Buffon, than any two men I ever saw in the world. They must have been bad physiognomists that did not discern his capacity and understanding by his very countenance. Every look conveyed a sentiment with it: he seemed to have no occasion for other language, and indeed he spoke little. I offered, as usual, to kiss the ground before him; and of this he seemed to take little notice, stretching out his hand and shaking mine upon my rising.

I SAT down with Aylo, three or four of the judges, Petros, Heikel the queen's chamberlain, and an Azage from the king's house, who whispered something in his ear, and went out; which interruption prevented me from speaking as I was prepared to do, or give him my present, which a man held behind me. He began gravely, "Yagoube, I think that is your name, hear what I say to you, and mark what I recommend to you. You are a man, I am told, who make it your business to wander in the fields in search after trees and grafs in solitary places, and to sit up all night alone looking at the stars of the heavens: Other countries are not like this, though this was never so bad as it is now. These wretches here are enemies to strangers; if they saw you alone in your own parlour, their first thought would be how to murder you; though they knew they were to get nothing by it, they would murder you for mere mischief." "The devil is strong in them," says a voice from a corner of the room, which appeared to be that of a priest. "Therefore," says the Ras, "after a long conversation with your friend Aylo, whose advice I hear you happily take, as indeed we all do, I have thought that situation best which leaves you at liberty to follow your own designs, at the

same time that it puts your person in safety ; that you will not be troubled with monks about their religious matters, or in danger from these rascals that may seek to murder you for money."

"WHAT are the monks?" says the same voice from the corner ; "the monks will never meddle with such a man as this."—"Therefore the king," continued the Ras, without taking any notice of the interruption, "has appointed you Baalomaal, and to command the Koccob horse, which I thought to have given to Francis, an old soldier of mine ; but he is poor, and we will provide for him better, for these appointments have honour, but little profit." "Sir," says Francis, who was in presence, but behind, "it is in much more honourable hands than either mine or the Armenian's, or any other white man's, since the days of Hatzè Menas, and so I told the king to-day." "Very well, Francis," says the Ras ; "it becomes a soldier to speak the truth, whether it makes for or against himself. Go then to the king, and kiss the ground upon your appointment. I see you have already learned this ceremony of our's ; Aylo and Heikel are very proper persons to go with you. The king expressed his surprise to me last night he had not seen you ; and there too is Tecla Mariam, the king's secretary, who came with your appointment from the palace to-day." The man in the corner, that I took for a priest, was this Tecla Mariam, a scribe. Out of the king's presence men of this order cover their heads, as do the priests, which was the reason of my mistake.

I THEN gave him a present, which he scarce looked at, as a number of people were pressing in at the door from curiosity.

riosity or business. Among these I discerned Abba Salama. Every body then went out but myself, and these people were rushing in behind me, and had divided me from my company. The Ras, however, seeing me standing alone, cried, "Shut the door;" and asked me, in a low tone of voice, "Have you any thing private to say?" "I see you are busy, Sir," said I; "but I will speak to Ozoro Esther." His anxious countenance brightened up in a moment. "That is true," says he, "Yagoube, it will require a long day to settle that account with you: Will the boy live?" "The life of man is in the hand of God," said I, "but I should hope the worst is over;" upon which he called to one of his servants, "Carry Yagoube to Ozoro Esther."

It is needless for me to take up the reader's time with any thing but what illustrates my travels; he may therefore guess the conversation that flowed from a grateful heart on that occasion. I ordered her child to be brought to her every forenoon, upon condition she returned him soon after mid-day. I then took a speedy leave of Ozoro Esther, the reason of which I told her when she was following me to the door. She said, "When shall I lay my hands upon that idiot Aylo? The Ras would have done any thing; he had appointed you Palambaras, but, upon conversing with Aylo, he had changed his mind. He says it will create envy, and take up your time. What signifies their envy? Do not they envy Ras Michael? and where can you pass your time better than at court, with a command under the king." I said, "All is for the best, Aylo did well; all is for the best." I then left her unconvinced, and saying, "I will not forgive this to Ayto Aylo these seven years."

Aylo and Heikel had gone on to the palace, wondering, as did the whole company, what could be my private conference with Michael, which, after playing abundantly with their curiosity, I explained to them next day.

I WENT afterwards to the king's palace, and met Aylo and Heikel at the door of the presence-chamber. Tecla Mariam walked before us to the foot of the throne; after which I advanced and prostrated myself upon the ground. "I have brought you a servant," says he to the king, "from so distant a country, that if you ever let him escape, we shall never be able to follow him, or know where to seek him." This was said facetiously by an old familiar servant; but the king made no reply, as far as we could guess, for his mouth was covered, nor did he shew any alteration of countenance. Five people were standing on each side of the throne, all young men, three on his left, and two on his right. One of these, the son of Tecla Mariam, (afterwards my great friend) who stood uppermost on the left hand, came up, and taking hold of me by the hand, placed me immediately above him; when seeing I had no knife in my girdle, he pulled out his own and gave it to me. Upon being placed, I again kissed the ground.

THE king was in an alcove; the rest went out of sight from where the throne was, and sat down. The usual questions now began about Jerusalem and the holy places—where my country was? which it was impossible to describe, as they knew the situation of no country but their own—why I came so far?—whether the moon and the stars, but especially the moon, was the same in my country as in theirs?—and a great many such idle and tiresome questions. I had several times  
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offered to take my present from the man who held it, that I might offer it to his Majesty and go away; but the king always made a sign to put it off, till, being tired to death with standing, I leaned against the wall. Aylo was fast asleep, and Ayto Heikel and the Greeks cursing their master in their heart for spoiling the good supper that Anthulè his treasurer had prepared for us. This, as we afterwards found out, the king very well knew, and resolved to try our patience to the utmost. At last, Ayto Aylo stole away to bed, and every body else after him, except those who had accompanied me, who were ready to die with thirst, and drop down with weariness. It was agreed by those that were out of sight, to send Tecla Mariam to whisper in the king's ear, that I had not been well, which he did, but no notice was taken of it. It was now past ten o'clock, and he shewed no inclination to go to bed.

HITHERTO, while there were strangers in the room, he had spoken to us by an officer called Kal Hatzé, *the voice or word of the king*; but now, when there were nine or ten of us, his menial servants, only present, he uncovered his face and mouth, and spoke himself. Sometimes it was about Jerusalem, sometimes about horses, at other times about shooting; again about the Indies; how far I could look into the heavens with my telescopes: and all these were deliberately and circumstantially repeated, if they were not pointedly answered. I was absolutely in despair, and scarcely able to speak a word, inwardly mourning the hardness of my lot in this my first preferment, and sincerely praying it might be my last promotion in this court. At last all the Greeks began to be impatient, and got out of the corner of the room behind the alcove, and stood immediately before the throne.



throne. The king seemed to be astonished at seeing them, and told them he thought they had all been at home long ago. They said, however, they would not go without me; which the king said could not be, for one of the duties of my employment was to be charged with the door of his bed-chamber that night.

I THINK I could almost have killed him in that instant. At last Ayto Heikel, taking courage, came forward to him, pretending a message from the queen, and whispered him something in the ear, probably that the Ras would take it ill. He then laughed, said he thought we had supped, and dismissed us.



CHAP.



## CHAP. IX.

*Transactions at Gondar.*

WE went all to Authulé's house to supper in violent rage, such anger as is usual with hungry men. We brought with us from the palace three of my brother Baalomaals, and one who had stood to make up the number, though he was not in office; his name was Guebra Mascal, he was a sister's son of the Ras, and commanded one third of the troops of Tigré, which carried fire-arms, that is about 2000 men. He was reputed the best officer of that kind that the Ras had, and was a man about 30 years of age, short, square, and well made, with a very unpromising countenance; flat nose, wide mouth, of a very yellow complexion, and much pitted with the small-pox; he had a most uncommon presumption upon the merit of past services, and had the greatest opinion of his own knowledge in the use of fire-arms, to which he did not scruple to say Ras Michael owed all his victories. Indeed it was to the good opinion that the Ras

had of him as a soldier that he owed his being suffered to continue at Gondar; for he was suspected to have been familiar with one of his uncle's wives in Tigré, by whom it was thought he had a child, at least the Ras put away his wife, and never owned the child to be his.

THIS man supped with us that night, and thence began one of the most serious affairs I ever had in Abyssinia. Guebra Mascāl, as usual, vaunted incessantly his skill in fire-arms, the wonderful gun that he had, and feats he had done with it. Petros said, laughing, to him, "You have a genius for shooting, but you have had no opportunity to learn. Now, Yagoube is come, he will teach you something worth talking off." They had all drank abundantly, and Guebra Mascāl had uttered words that I thought were in contempt of me. I believe, replied I peevishly enough, Guebra Mascāl, I should suspect, from your discourse, you neither knew men nor guns; every gun of mine in the hands of my servants shall kill twice as far as yours, for my own, it is not worth my while to put a ball in it: When I compare with you, the end of a tallow-candle in my gun shall do more execution than an iron ball in the best of yours, with all the skill and experience you pretend to.

He said I was a Frank, and a liar, and, upon my immediately rising up, he gave me a kick with his foot. I was quite blind with passion, seized him by the throat, and threw him on the ground flout as he was. The Abyssinians know nothing of either wrestling or boxing. He drew his knife as he was falling, attempted to cut me in the face, but his arm not being at freedom, all he could do was to give me a very trifling stab, or wound, near the crown of the head,

head, so that the blood trickled down over my face. I had tript him up, but till then had never struck him. I now wrested the knife from him with a full intention to kill him; but Providence directed better. Instead of the point, I struck so violently with the handle upon his face as to leave scars, which would be distinguished even among the deep marks of the small-pox. An adventure so new, and so unexpected, presently overcame the effects of wine. It was too late to disturb anybody either in the palace or at the house of the Ras. A hundred opinions were immediately started; some were for sending us up to the king, as we were actually in the precincts of the palace, where lifting a hand is death. Ayto Heikel advised that I should go, late as it was, to Koscam; and Petros, that I should repair immediately to the house of Ayto Aylo, while the two Baalomaals were for taking me to sleep in the palace. Anthulè, in whose house I was, and who was therefore most shocked at the outrage, wished me to stay in his house, where I was, from a supposition that I was seriously wounded, which all of them, seeing the blood fall over my eyes, seemed to think was the case, and he, in the morning, at the king's rising, was to state the matter as it happened. All these advices appeared good when they were proposed; for my part, I thought they only tended to make bad worse, and bore the appearance of guilt, of which I was not conscious.

I now determined to go home, and to bed in my own house. With that intention, I washed my face and wound with vinegar, and found the blood to be already staunched. I then wrapt myself up in my cloak, and returned home without accident, and went to bed. But this would neither satisfy Ayto Heikel nor Petros, who went to the house of

Ayto Aylo, then past midnight, so that early in the morning, when scarce light, I saw him come into my chamber. Guebra Mascall had fled to the house of Kefla Yafous his relation ; and the first news we heard in the morning, after Ayto Aylo arrived, were, that Guebra Mascall was in irons at the Ras's house.

EVERY person that came afterwards brought up some new account ; the whole people present had been examined, and had given, without variation, the true particulars of my forbearance, and his insolent behaviour. Every body trembled for some violent resolution the Ras was to take on my first complaint. The town was full of Tigrè soldiers, and nobody saw clearer than I did, however favourable a turn this had taken for me in the beginning, it might be my destruction in the end.

I ASKED Ayto Aylo his opinion. He seemed at a loss to give it me ; but said, in an uncertain tone of voice, he could wish that I would not complain of Guebra Mascall while I was angry, or while the Ras was so inveterate against him, till some of his friends had spoken, and appeased, at least, his first resentment. I answered, " That I was of a contrary opinion, and that no time was to be lost : remember the letter of Mahomet Gibberti ; remember his confidence yesterday of my being safe where he was ; remember the influence of Ozoro Estlier, and do not let us lose a moment." " What, says Aylo to me in great surprise, are you mad ? Would you have him cut to pieces in the midst of 20,000 of his countrymen ? Would you be dimmenia, that is, guilty of the blood of all the province of Tigrè, through which you must go in your way home ?"

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"Just the contrary, said I, nobody has so great a right over the Ras's anger as I have, being the person injured ; and, as you and I can get access to Ozoro Esther when we please, let us go immediately thither, and stop the progress of this affair while it is not yet generally known. People that talk of my being wounded expect to see me, I suppose, without a leg or an arm. When they see me so early riding in the street, all will pass for a story as it should do. Would you wish to pardon him entirely?"—"That goes against my heart, too, says Aylo, he is a bad man."—"My good friend, said I, be in this guided by me, I know we both think the same thing. If he is a bad man, he was a bad man before I knew him. You know what you told me yourself of the Ras's jealousy of him. What if he was to revenge his own wrongs, under pretence of giving me satisfaction for mine ? Come, lose no time, get upon your mule, go with me to Ozoro Esther, I will answer for the consequences."

WE arrived there ; the Ras was not sitting in judgment, he had drank hard the night before, on occasion of Powusfen's marriage, and was not in bed when the story of the fray reached him. We found Ozoro Esther in a violent anger and agitation, which was much alleviated by my laughing. On her asking me about my wound, which had been represented to her as dangerous, "I am afraid, said I, poor Guebra Mascall is worse wounded than I." "Is he wounded too ? says she ; I hope it is in his heart." "Indeed, replied I, Madam, there are no wounds on either side. He was very drunk, and I gave him several blows upon the face as he deserved, and he has already got all the chastisement he ought to have ; it was all a piece of folly." "Prodigious ! says she ; is this so ?" "It is so, says Aylo, and you shall hear

hear it all by-and-by, only let us stop the propagation of this foolish story."

THE Ras in the instant sent for us. He was naked, sitting on a stool, and a slave swathing up his lame leg with a broad belt or bandage. I asked him calmly and pleasantly if I could be of any service to him? He looked at me with a grin, the most ghastly I ever saw, as half displeased. "What! says he, are you all mad? Aylo, what is the matter between him and that miscreant Guebra Mascall?"—"Why, said I, I am come to tell you that myself; why do you ask Ayto Aylo? Guebra Mascall got drunk, was insolent, and struck me. I was sober, and beat him, as you will see by his face; and I have now come to you to say I am sorry that I lifted my hand against your nephew; but he was in the wrong, and drunk; and I thought it was better to chastise him on the spot, than trust him to you, who perhaps might take the affair to heart, for we all know your justice, and that being your relation is no excuse when you judge between man and man. "I order you, Aylo, says Michael, as you esteem my friendship, to tell me the truth, really as it was, and without disguise or concealment."

AYLO began accordingly to relate the whole history, when a servant called me out to Ozoro Esther. I found with her another nephew of the Ras, a much better man, called Wellata Selassé, who came from Kessa Yafous, and Guebra Mascall himself, desiring I would forgive and intercede for him, for it was a drunken quarrel without malice. Ozoro Esther had told him part. "Come in with me, said I, and you shall see I never will leave the Ras till he forgive him." "Let him punish him, says Wellata Selassé, he is a bad man, but

but don't let the Ras either kill or maim him." "Come, said I, let us go to the Ras, and he shall neither kill, maim, nor punish him, if I can help it. It is my first request; if he refuses me I will return to Jidda; come and hear."

AYLO had urged the thing home to the Ras in the proper light—that of my safety. "You are a wise man, says Michael, now perfectly cool, as soon as he saw me and Welleta Selassé. It is a man like you that goes far in safety, which is the end we all aim at. I feel the affront offered you more than you do, but will not have the punishment attributed to you; this affair shall turn to your honour and security, and in that light only I can pass over his insolence." "Welleta Selassé, says he, falling into a violent passion in an instant, What sort of behaviour is this my men have adopted with strangers? and *my stranger*, too, and in the king's palace, and the king's servant? What! am I dead? or become incapable of governing longer?" Welleta Selassé bowed, but was afraid to speak, and indeed the Ras looked like a fiend.

"COME, says the Ras, let me see your head." I shewed him where the blood was already hardened, and said it was a very slight cut. "A cut, continued Michael, over that part, with one of our knives, is mortal." "You see, Sir, said I, I have not even elipt the hair about the wound; it is nothing. Now give me your promise you will set Guebra Mafcal at liberty; and not only that, but you are not to reproach him with the affair further than that he was drunk, not a crime in this country." "No, truly, says he, it is not; but that is, because it is very rare that people fight with knives when they are drunk. I scarce ever heard of it, even



in the camp." "I fancy, said I, endeavouring to give a light turn to the conversation, they have not often wherewithal to get drunk in your camp." "Not this last year, says he, laughing, there were no houses in the country." "But let me only merit, said I, Welleta Selassé's friendship, by making him the messenger of good news to Guebra Mascal, that he is at liberty, and you have forgiven him." "At liberty! says he, Where is he?" "In your house, said I, somewhere, in irons." "That is Esther's intelligence, continued the Ras; these women tell you all their secrets, but when I remember your behaviour to them I do not wonder at it, and that consideration likewise obliges me to grant what you ask. Go, Welleta Selassé, and free that dog from his collar, and direct him to go to Welleta Michael, who will give him his orders to levy the meery in Woggora; let him not see my face till he returns.

OZORO ESTHER gave us breakfast, to which several of the Greeks came. After which I went to Koscam, where I heard a thousand curses upon Guebra Mascal. The whole affair was now made up, and the king was acquainted with the issue of it. I stood in my place, where he shewed me very great marks of favour; he was grave, however, and sorrowful, as if mortified with what had happened. The king ordered me to stay and dine at the palace, and he would send me my dinner. I there saw the sons of Kasmati Eshté, Aylo, and Engedan, and two Welleta Selassés; one the son of Tecla Mariam, the other the son of a great nobleman in Goiam, all young men, with whom I lived ever after in perfect familiarity and friendship. The two last were my brethren Baalomaal, or gentlemen of the king's bed-chamber.

THEY all seemed to have taken my cause to heart more than I wished them to do, for fear it should be productive of some new quarrel. For my own part, I never was so dejected in my life. The troublesome prospect before me presented itself day and night. I more than twenty times resolved to return by Tigrè, to which I was more inclined by the loss of a young man who accompanied me through Barbary, and assisted me in the drawings of architecture which I made for the king there, part of which he was still advancing here, when a dysentery, which had attacked him in Arabia Felix, put an end to his life\* at Gondar. A considerable disturbance was apprehended upon burying him in a church-yard. Abba Salama used his utmost endeavours to raise the populace and take him out of his grave; but some exertions of the Ras quieted both Abba Salama and the tumults.

I BEGAN, however, to look upon every thing now as full of difficulty and danger; and, from this constant fretting and despondency, I found my health much impaired, and that I was upon the point of becoming seriously ill. There was one thing that contributed in some measure to dissipate these melancholy thoughts, which was, that all Gondar was in one scene of festivity. Ozoro Ayabdar, daughter of the late Welled Hawaryat, by Ozoro Altaf, Ozoro Esther's sister, and the Iteghè's youngest daughter, consequently granddaughter to Michael, was married to Powussèn, now governor of Begemder. The king gave her large districts of land in that province, and Ras Michael a large portion of gold, No. 50. H h muskets,

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\* See Introduction.

muskets, cattle, and horses. All the town, that wished to be well-looked upon by either party, brought something considerable as a present. The Ras, Ozoro Esther, and Ozoro Altash, entertained all Gondar. A vast number of cattle was slaughtered every day, and the whole town looked like one great market; the common people, in every street, appearing loaded with pieces of raw beef, while drink circulated in the same proportion. The Ras insisted upon my dining with him every day, when he was sure to give me a headache with the quantity of mead, or hydromel, he forced me to swallow, a liquor that never agreed with me from the first day to the last.

AFTER dinner we flit away to parties of ladies, where anarchy prevailed as complete as at the house of the Ras. All the married women ate, drank, and smoked like the men; and it is impossible to convey to the reader any idea of this bacchanalian scene in terms of common decency. I found it necessary to quit this riot for a short time, and get leave to breathe the fresh air of the country, at such a distance as that, once a day, or once in two days, I might be at the palace, and avoid the constant succession of those violent scenes of debauchery of which no European can form any idea, and which it was impossible to escape, even at Koscarn.

ALTHOUGH the king's favour, the protection of the Ras, and my obliging, attentive, and lowly behaviour to every body, had made me as popular as I could wish at Gondar, and among the Tigrans fully as much as those of Angara, yet it was easy to perceive, that the cause of my quarrel with Cueba Mascari was not yet forgot.

ONE day, when I was standing by the king in the palace, he asked, in discourse, "Whether I, too, was not drunk in the quarrel with Guebra Mascall, before we came to blows?" and, upon my saying that I was perfectly sober, both before and after, because Anthulè's red wine was finished, and I never willingly drank hydromel, or mead, he asked with a degree of keenness, "Did you then soberly say to Guebra Mascall, that an end of a tallow candle, in a gun in your hand, would do more execution than an iron bullet in his?"—"Certainly, Sir, I did so."—"And why did you say this?" says the king dryly enough, and in a manner I had not before observed. "Because, replied I, it was truth, and a proper reproof to a vain man, who, whatever eminence he might have obtained in a country like this, has not knowledge enough to entitle him to the trust of cleaning a gun in mine."—"O! ho! continued the king; as for his knowledge I am not speaking of that, but about his gun. You will not persuade me that, with a tallow candle, you can kill a man or a horse."—"Pardon me, Sir, said I, bowing very respectfully, I will attempt to persuade you of nothing but what you please to be convinced of: Guebra Mascall is my equal no more, you are my master, and, while I am at your court, under your protection, you are in place of my sovereign, it would be great presumption in me to argue with you, or lead to a conversation against an opinion that you profess you are already fixed in."—"No, no, says he, with an air of great kindness, by no means, I was only afraid you would expose yourself before bad people; what you say to me is nothing."—"And what I say to you, Sir, has always been as scrupulously true as if I had been speaking to the king my native sovereign and master. Whether

I can kill a man with a candle, or not, is an experiment that should not be made. Tell me, however, what I shall do before you that you may deem an equivalent? Will piercing the table, upon which your dinner is served, (it was of fycamore, about three quarters of an inch thick), at the length of this room, be deemed a sufficient proof of what I advanced?"

"Ah, Yagoube, Yagoube, says the king, take care what you say. That is indeed more than Guebra Mascall will do at that distance; but take great care; you don't know these people; they will lie themselves all day; nay, their whole life is one lie; but of you they expect better, or would be glad to find worse; take care." Ayto Engedan, who was then present, said, "I am sure if Yagoube says he can do it, he will do it; but how, I don't know. Can you shoot through my shield with a tallow candle?"—"To you, Ayto Engedan, said I, I can speak freely; I could shoot thro' your shield if it was the strongest in the army, and kill the strongest man in the army that held it before him. When will you see this tried?"—"Why now, says the king; there is *nobody here*."—"The sooner the better, said I; I would not wish to remain for a moment longer under so disagreeable an imputation as that of lying, an infamous one in my country, whatever it may be in this. Let me send for my gun; the king will look out at the window."—"Nobody," says he, knows any thing of it; *nobody will come*."

THE king appeared to be very anxious, and, I saw plainly, incredulous. The gun was brought; Engedan's shield was produced, which was of a strong buffalo's hide. "This is a weak one, give me one stronger." He shook his head,

head, and said, "Ah, Yagoubc, you'll find it strong enough; Engedan's shield is known to be no toy." Tecla Mariam brought such a shield, and the Billetana Gueta Tecla another, both of which were most excellent in their kind. I loaded the gun before them, first with powder, then upon it slid down one half of what we call a farthing candle; and, having beat off the handles of three shields, I put them close in contact with each other, and set them all three against a post.

Now, Engedan, said I, when you please say—Fire! but mind you have taken leave of your good shield for ever." The word was given, and the gun fired. It struck the three shields, neither in the most difficult nor the easiest place for perforation, something less than half way between the rim and the boss. The candle went through the three shields with such violence that it dashed itself to a thousand pieces against a stone-wall behind it. I turned to Engedan, saying very lowly, gravely, and without exultation or triumph, on the contrary with absolute indifference, "Did not I tell you your shield was naught?" A great shout of applause followed from about a thousand people that were gathered together. The three shields were carried to the king, who exclaimed in great transport, I did not believe it before I saw it, and I can scarce believe it now I have seen it. Where is Mafcal's confidence now? But what do either of us know? We know nothing." I thought he looked abashed.

"AYTO ENGEDAN, said I, we must have a touch at that table. It was said, the piercing that was more than Guebra  
Mafcal

Mafcal could do. We have one half of the candle left still; it is the thinnest, weakest half, and I shall put the wick foremost, because the cotton is softest." The table being now properly placed, to Engedan's utmost astonishment the candle, with the wick foremost, went through the table, as the other had gone through the three shields. "By St Michael! says Engedan, Yagoube, hereafter say to me you can raise my father Eshté from the grave, and I will believe you." Some priests who were there, though surprised at first, seemed afterward to treat it rather lightly, because they thought it below their dignity to be surprised at any thing. They said it was done (*mucktoub*) by writing, by which they meant magic. Every body embraced that opinion as an evident and rational one, and so the wonder with them ceased. But it was not so with the king: It made the most favourable and lasting impression upon his mind; nor did I ever after see, in his countenance, any marks either of doubt or diffidence, but always, on the contrary, the most decisive proofs of friendship, confidence, and attention, and the most implicit belief of every thing I advanced upon any subject from my own knowledge.

THE experiment was twice tried afterwards in presence of Ras Michael. But he would not risk his good shields and always produced the table, saying, "Engedan and those foolish boys were rightly served; they thought Yagoube was a liar like themselves, and they lost their shields; but I believed him, and gave him my table for curiosity only, and so I saved mine."

As I may now say I was settled in this country, and had an opportunity of being informed of the manners, govern-

ment, and present state of it, I shall here inform the reader of what I think most worthy his attention, whether ancient or modern, while we are yet in peace, before we are called out to a campaign or war, attended with every disadvantage, danger, and source of confusion.

**CHAP.**





## CHAP. X.

*Geographical Division of Abyssinia into Provinces.*

**A**T Masuah, that is, on the coast of the Red Sea, begins an imaginary division of Abyssinia into two, which is rather a division of language than strictly to be understood as territorial. The first division is called *Tigré*, between the Red Sea and the river Tacazzé. Between that river and the Nile, westward, where it bounds the Galla, it is called *Ambara*.

WHATEVER convenience there may be from this division, there is neither geographical nor historical precision in it, for there are many little provinces included in the first that do not belong to *Tigré*; and, in the second division, which is *Amhara*, that which gives the name is but a very small part of it.

AGAIN,

AGAIN, in point of language, there is a variety of tongues spoken in the second division besides that of Amhara. In Tigrè, however, the separation as to languages holds true, as there is no tongue known there but Geez, or that of the Shepherds.

MASUAH, in ancient times, was one of the principal places of residence of the Baharnagash, who, when he was not there himself, constantly left his deputy, or lieutenant. In summer he resided for several months in the island of Dahalac, then accounted part of his territory. He was, after the King and Betwudet, the person of the greatest consideration in the kingdom, and was invested with sendick and nagareet, the kettle-drum, and colours, marks of supreme command.

MASUAH was taken, and a basha established there soon after, as we have seen in the history, in the reign of Menas, when the Baharnagash, named Isaac, confederated with the Turkish basha, and ceded to him a great territory, part of his own government, and with it Dobarwa, the capital of his province, divided only by the river Mareb from Tigrè. From this time this office fell into disrepute in the kingdom. The sendick and nagareet, the marks of supreme power, were taken from him, and he never was allowed a place in council, unless specially called on by the king. He preserves his privilege of being crowned with gold; but, when appointed, has a cloak thrown over him, the one side white, the other a dark blue, and the officer who crowns him admonishes him of what will befall him if he preserves his allegiance, which is signified by the white side of the cloak; and the disgrace and punishment that is to attend his treason, and which has fallen upon his predecessors, which he figures to him by turning up the colour of mourning.

BESIDES the dignity attending this office, it was also one of the most lucrative. Frankincense, myrrh, and a species of cinnamon, called by the Italians Cannella, with several kinds of gums and dyes, all very precious, from Cape Gardafan to Bilur, were the valuable produce of this country: but this territory, though considerable in length, is not of any great breadth; for, from south of Hadea to Masuah, it consists in a belt seldom above forty miles from the sea, which is bounded by a ridge of very high mountains, running parallel to the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea, as far as Masuah.

AFTER Azab begin the mines of fossile salt, which, cut into square, solid bricks of about a foot long, serve in place of the silver currency in Abyssinia; and from this, as from a kind of mint, great benefit accrues also.

FROM Masuah the same narrow belt continues to Suakem; nay, indeed, though the rains do not reach so far, the mountains continue to the Isthmus of Suez. This northern province of the Baharnagash is called the Habab, or the land of the Agaazi, or Shepherds; they speak one language, which they call Geez, or the language of the Agaazi. From the earliest times, they have had letters and writing among them; and no other has ever been introduced into Abyssinia, to this day, as we have already observed.

SINCE the expulsion of the Turks from Dobarwa and the continent of Abyssinia, Masuah has been governed by a Naybe, himself one of the Shepherds, by Mahometan. A treaty formerly subsisted, that the king should receive half of the

the revenue of the customhouse in Mafuah; in return for which he was suffered to enjoy that small stripe of barren, dry country called Samhar, inhabited by black shepherds called Shiho, reaching from Hamazen on the north to the foot of the mountain Taranta on the south; but, by the favour of Michael, that is, by bribery and corruption, he has possessed himself of two large frontier towns, Dixan and Dobarwa, by lease, for a trifling sum, which he pays the king yearly; this must necessarily very much weaken this state, if it should ever again have war with the Turks, of which indeed there is no great probability.

THE next province in Abyssinia, as well for greatness as riches, power, and dignity, and nearest Mafuah, is Tigre. It is bounded by the territory of the Baharnagash, that is, by the river Mareb on the east, and the Tacazzè upon the west. It is about one hundred and twenty miles broad from E. to W. and two hundred from N. to S. This is its present situation. The hand of usurping power has abolished all distinction on the west-side of the Tacazzè; besides, many large governments, such as Enderta and Antalow, and great part of the Baharnagash, were swallowed up in this province to the east.

WHAT, in a special manner, makes the riches of Tigre, is, that it lies nearest the market, which is Arabia; and all the merchandize destined to cross the Red Sea must pass through this province, so that the governor has the choice of all commodities wherewith to make his market. The strongest male, the most beautiful female slaves, the purest gold, the largest teeth of ivory, all must pass through his hand. Fire-arms, moreover, which for many years have decided

who is the most powerful in Abyffinia, all these come from Arabia, and not one can be purchased without his knowing to whom it goes, and after his having had the first refusal of it.

SIRE, a province about twenty-five miles broad, and not much more in length, is reckoned as part of Tigré also, but this is not a new usurpation. It lost the rank of a province, and was united to Tigré for the misbehaviour of its governor Kasmati Claudius, in an expedition against the Shangalla in the reign of Yafous the Great. In my time, it began again to get into reputation, and was by Ras Michael's own consent disjoined from his province, and given first to his son Welled Hawaryat, together with Samen, and, after his death, to Ayto Tesfos, a very amiable man, gallant soldier, and good officer; who, fighting bravely in the king's service at the battle of Serbraxos, was there wounded and taken prisoner, and died of his wounds afterwards.

AFTER passing the Tacazzè, the boundary between Sirè and Samen, we come to that mountainous province called by the last name. A large chain of rugged mountains, where is the Jews Rock, (which I shall often mention as the highest), reaches from the south of Tigré down near to Waldubba, the low, hot country that bounds Abyffinia on the north. It is about 80 miles in length, in few places 30 broad, and in some much less. It is in great part possessed by Jews, and *there* Gideon and Judith, king and queen of that nation, and, as they say, of the house of Judah, maintain still their ancient sovereignty and religion from very early times.

ON the N. E. of Tigré lies the province of Begemder. It borders upon Angot, whose governor is called Angot Kas; but the whole province now, excepting a few villages, is conquered by the Galla.

It has Amhara, which runs parallel to it, on the south, and is separated from it by the river Bashilo. Both these provinces are bounded by the river Nile on the west. Begemder is about 180 miles in its greatest length, and 60 in breadth, comprehending Lasta, a mountainous province, sometimes depending on Begemder, but often in rebellion. The inhabitants are esteemed the best soldiers in Abyssinia, men of great strength and stature, but cruel and uncivilized; so that they are called, in common conversation and writing, the peasants, or barbarians of Lasta; they pay to the king 1000 ounces of gold.

SEVERAL small provinces are now dismembered from Begemder, such as Foggora, a small stripe reaching S. and N. about 35 miles between Emfras and Dara, and about 12 miles broad from E. to W. from the mountains of Begemder to the lake Tzana. On the north end of this are two small governments, Dreeda and Karoota, the only territory in Abyssinia that produces wine, the merchants trade to Caffa and Narea, in the country of the Galla. We speak of these territories as they are in point of right; but when a nobleman of great power is governor of the province of Begemder, he values not lesser rights, but unites them all to his province.

BEGEMDER is the strength of Abyssinia in horsemen. It is said, that, with Lasta, it can bring out 45,000 men; but this

this, as far as ever I could inform myself, is a great exaggeration. They are exceeding good soldiers when they are pleased with their general, and the cause for which they fight; otherwise, they are easily divided, great many private interests being continually kept alive, as it is thought industriously, by government itself. It is well stocked with cattle of every kind, all very beautiful. The mountains are full of iron-mines; they are not so steep and rocky nor so frequent, as in other provinces, if we except only Lafta, and abound in all sort of wild fowl and game.

THE south end of the province near Nefas Musa is cut into prodigious gullics apparently by floods, of which we have no history. It is the great barrier against the encroachments of the Galla; and, by many attempts, they have tried to make a settlement in it, but all in vain. Whole tribes of them have been extinguished in this their endeavour.

IN many provinces of Abyssinia, favour is the only necessary to procure the government; others are given to poor noblemen, that, by fleecing the people, they may grow rich, and repair their fortune. But the consequence of Begemder is so well known to the state, as reaching so near the metropolis, and supplying it so constantly with all sorts of provisions, that none but noblemen of rank, family, and character, able to maintain a large number of troops always on foot, and in good order, are trusted with its government.

IMMEDIATELY next to this is Amhara, between the two rivers Bashilo and Geshen. The length of this country  
from

from E. to W. is about 120 miles, and its breadth something more than 40. It is a very mountainous country, full of nobility; the men are reckoned the handsomest in Abyssinia, as well as the bravest. With the ordinary arms, the lance and shield, they are thought to be superior to double the number of any other foldiers in the kingdom. What, besides, added to the dignity of this province, was the high mountain of Geshen, or the grassy mountain, whereon the king's sons were formerly imprisoned, till surpris'd and murdered there in the Adelan war.

BETWEEN the two rivers Geshen and Samba, is a low, unwholesome, though fertile province, called Walaka; and southward of that is Upper Shoa. This province, or kingdom, was famous for the retreat it gave to the only remaining prince of the house of Solomon, who fled from the massacre of his brethren by Judith, about the year 900, upon the rock of Damo. Here the royal family remained in security, and increased in number, for near 400 years, till they were restored. From thenceforward, as long as the king resided in the south of his dominions, great tenderness and distinction was shewn to the inhabitants of this province; and when the king returned again to Tigre, he abandoned them tacitly to their own government.

AMHA YASOUS, prince at this day, and lineal descendant of the governor who first acknowledged the king, is now by connivance sovereign of that province. In order to keep himself as independent and separate from the rest of Abyssinia as possible, he has sacrificed the province of Walaka, which belonged to him, to the Galla, who, by his own desire, have surrounded Shoa on every side. But it is full of  
the



the bravest, best horsemen, and best accoutred beyond all comparison of any in Abyssinia, and, when they please, they can dispossess the Galla. Safe and independent as the prince of Shoa now is, he is still the loyalist, and the friend to monarchy he ever was; and, upon any signal distress happening to the king, he never failed to succour him powerfully with gold and troops, far beyond the quota formerly due from his province. This Shoa boasts, likewise, the honour of being the native country of Tecla Haimanout, restorer of the line of Solomon, the founder of the monastery and Order of the monks of Debra Libanos, and of the power and wealth of the Abuna, and the clergy in general, of Abyssinia.

GOJAM, from north-east to south-east, is about 80 miles in length, and 40 in breadth. It is a very flat country, and all in pasture; has few mountains, but these are very high ones, and are chiefly on the banks of the Nile, to the south, which river surrounds the province; so that, to a person who should walk round Gojam, the Nile would be always on his left hand, from where it went south, falling out of the lake Tzana, till it turns north through Fazuclo into the country of Sennaar and Egypt.

GOJAM is full of great herds of cattle, the largest in the high parts of Abyssinia. The men are in the lowest esteem as soldiers, but the country is very populous. The Jesuits were settled in many convents throughout the province, and are no where half so much detested. The monks of Gojam are those of St Eustathius, which may be called the Low Church of Abyssinia. They are much inclined to turbulence in religious matters, and are, therefore, always made tools by discontented people, who have no religion at all.

ON the south-east of the kingdom of Gojam is Damot. It is bounded by the Temci on the east, by the Gult on the west, by the Nile on the south, and by the high mountains of Amid Amid on the north. It is about 40 miles in length from north to south, and something more than 20 in breadth from east to west. But all this peninsula, surrounded with the river, is called Gojam, in general terms, from a line down through the south end of the lake to Miné, the passage of the Nile in the way to Narea.

It is surprising the Jesuits, notwithstanding their long abode in Gojam, have not known where this neighbouring country of Damot was situated, but have placed it south of the Nile. They were often, however, in Damot, when Sela Christos was attempting the conquest and conversion of the Agows.

—ON the other side of Amid Amid is the province of the Agows, bounded by those mountains on the east; by Burè and Umbarma, and the country of the Gongas, on the west; by Damot and Gafat upon the south, and Dingleber on the north.

ALL those countries from Abbo, such as Goutto, Aroosi, and Wainadega, were formerly inhabited by Agows; but, partly by the war with the Galla beyond the Nile, partly by their own constant rebellions, this territory, called Maitsa, which is the flat country on both sides of the Nile, is quite uninhabited, and at last hath been given to colonies of peaceable Galla, chiefly Djawi, who fill the whole low country to the foot of the mountains Aformasha, in place of the Agows, the first occupiers.

MAITSHA, from the flatness of the country, not draining soon after the rains, is in all places wet, but in many, miry and marshy ; it produces little or no corn, but depends entirely upon a plant called *Enfete*\*, which furnishes the people both with wholesome and delicate food throughout the year. For the rest, this province abounds in large fine cattle, and breeds some indifferent horses.

UPON the mountains, above Maitsha, is the country of the Agows, the richest province still in Abyssinia, notwithstanding the multitude of devastations it has suffered. They lie round the country above described, from Aforma-sha to Quaquera, where are the heads of two large rivers, the Kelti and Branti. These are called the Agows of Damot, from their nearness to that province, in contradistinction to the Agows of Lasta, who are called Tcheratz-Agow, from Tchera, a principal town, tribe, and district near Lasta and Begemder.

THE Gafats, inhabiting a small district adjoining to the Galla, have also distinct languages, so have the Galla themselves, of whom we have often spoken ; they are a large nation.

FROM Dingleber all along the lake, below the mountains bounding Guesgué and Kuara, is called Dembea. This low province on the south of Gondar, and Woggora the small high province on the east, are all sown with wheat, and are the granaries of Abyssinia. Dembea seems once to have been

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\* See the article *enfete* in the appendix.

been occupied entirely by the lake, and we see all over it marks that cannot be mistaken, so that this large extent of water is visibly upon the decrease; and this agrees with what is observed of stagnant pools in general throughout the world. Dembea is called Atté-Kolla, *the king's food*, or maintenance, its produce being assigned for the supplying of the king's household. It is governed by an officer called Cantiba; it is a lucrative post; but he is not reckoned one of the great officers of the empire, and has no place in council.

SOUTH from Dembea is Kuara, a very mountainous province confining upon the Pagan blacks, or Shangalla, called Gongas and Guba, the Macrobiani of the ancients. It is a very unwholesome province, but abounding in gold, not of its own produce, but that of its neighbourhood, these Pagans—Guba, Nuba, and Shangalla. Kuara signifies the *sun*, and Beja (that is Atbara, and the low parts of Sennaar, the country of the Shepherds, adjoining) signifies the *moon*, in the language of these Shangalla. These names are some remains of their ancient superstitions. Kuara was the native country of the Iteghè, or queen-regent, of Kasmari Eshté, Welled de l'Oul, Gueta, Eusebius, and Palambaras Mammo.

IN the low country of Kuara, near to Sennaar, there is a settlement of Pagan blacks called Ganjar. They are mostly cavalry, and live entirely by hunting and plundering the Arabs of Atbara and Fazuclo. Their origin is this: Upon the invasion of the Arabs after the coming of Mahomet, the black slaves deserted from their masters, the Shepherds, and took up their habitation, where they have not considerably

multiplied, otherwise than by the accession of vagrants and fugitives, whom they get from both kingdoms. They are generally under the command of the governor of Kuara, and were so when I was in Abyssinia, though they refused to follow their governor Coque Abou Barea to fight against Michael, but whether from fear or affection I know not; I believe the former.

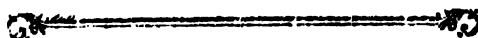
THE governor of Kuara is one of the great officers of state, and, being the king's lieutenant-general, has absolute power in his province, and carries *sendick* and *nagareet*. His kettle-drums are silver, and his privilege is to beat these drums even in marching through the capital, which no governor of a province is permitted to do, none but the king's nagareets or kettle-drums being suffered to be beat there, or any where in a town where the king is; but the governor of Kuara is intitled to continue beating his drums till he comes to the foot of the outer stair of the king's palace. This privilege, from some good behaviour of the first officer to whom the command was given, was conferred upon the post by David II. called Degami Daid, who conquered the province from the *Shepherds*, its old inhabitants.

NARA, and Ras el Feel, Tchelga, and on to Tcherkin, is a frontier wholly inhabited by Mahometans. Its government is generally given to a stranger, often to a Mahometan, but one of that faith is always deputy-governor. The use of keeping troops here is to defend the friendly Arabs and Shepherds, who remain in their allegiance to Abyssinia, from the resentment of the Arabs of Sennaar, their neighbours; and, by means of these friendly Arabs and Shepherds, secure

a constant supply of horses for the king's troops. It is a barren stripe of a very hot, unwholesome country, full of thick woods, and fit only for hunting. The inhabitants, fugitives from all nations, are chiefly Mahometans, but very bold and expert horsemen, using no other weapon but the broad sword, with which they attack the elephant and rhinoceros.

THERE are many other small provinces, which occasionally are annexed, and sometimes are separated, such as Guef-gué, to the eastward of Kuara; Waldubba, between the rivers Guangue and Angrab; Tzegadé and Walkayt on the west side of Waldubba; Abergalè and Selawa in the neighbourhood of Begemder; Temben, Dobas, Giannamora, Bur, and Engana, in the neighbourhood of Tigré, and many others: Such at least was the state of the country in my time, very different in all respects from what it has been represented. As to the precedence of these provinces we shall further speak, when we come to mention the officers of state and internal government in this country.





## CHAP. XI.

*Various Customs in Abyssinia similar to those in Persia, &c.—A bloody Banquet described, &c.*

**F**OR the sake of regularity, I shall here notice what might clearly be inferred from what is gone before. The crown of Abyssinia is hereditary, and has always been so, in one particular family, supposed to be that of Solomon by the queen of Saba, Negesta Azab, or queen of the south. It is nevertheless elective in this line; and there is no law of the land, nor custom, which gives the eldest son an exclusive title to succeed to his father.

THE practice has indeed been quite the contrary: when, at the death of a king, his sons are old enough to govern, and, by some accident, not yet sent prisoners to the mountain, then the eldest, or he that is next, and not confined, generally takes possession of the throne by the strength of his father's friends; but if no heir is then in the low country, the

the choice of the king is always according to the will of the minister, which passes for that of the people; and, his inclination and interest being to govern, he never fails to choose an infant whom thereafter he directs, ruling the kingdom absolutely during the minority, which generally exhausts, or is equal to the term of his life.

FROM this flow all the misfortunes of this unhappy country. This very defect arises from a desire to institute a more than ordinary perfect form of government; for the Abyssinians first position was, "Woe be to the kingdom whose king is a child;" and this they know must often happen when succession is left to the course of nature. But when there was a choice to be made out of two hundred persons all of the same family, all capable of reigning, it was their own fault, they thought, if they had not always a prince of proper age and qualification to rule the kingdom, according to the necessities of the times, and to preserve the succession of the family in the house of Solomon, agreeable to the laws of the land. And indeed it has been this manner of reasoning, good at first view, though found afterwards but too fallacious, which has ruined their kingdom in part, and often brought the whole into the utmost hazard and jeopardy.

THE king is anointed with plain oil of olives, which, being poured upon the crown of his head, he rubs into his long hair indecently enough with both his hands, pretty much as his soldiers do with theirs when they get access to plenty of butter.



THE crown is made in the shape of a priest's mitre, or head-piece ; it is a kind of helmet, covering the king's forehead, cheeks, and neck. It is lined with blue taffety ; the outside is half gold and half silver, of the most beautiful filigrane work.

THE crown, in Joas's time, was burnt, with part of the palace, on that day when Ras Michael's dwarf was shot in his own house before him. The present was since made by the Greeks from Smyrna, who have large appointments here, and work with very great taste and elegance, though they have not near so much encouragement as formerly.

UPON the top of the crown was a ball of red glass, or crystal, with several bells of different colours within it. It seems to me to have formerly been no better than part of the stopper of a glass-decanter. Be that as it may, it was lost in Yafous's time at the defeat of Sennaar. It was found, however, by a Mahometan, and brought by Guangoul, chief of the Bertuma Galla, to the frontiers of Tigrè, where Michael, governor of that province, went with an army in great ceremony to receive it, and, returning with it, gave it to king Yafous, making thereby a great advance towards the king's favour.

SOME people \*, among the other unwarranted things they have advanced, have said, That, at the king's coronation, a gold ear-ring is put into his ears, and a drawn sword into his hand, and that all the people fall down and worship him ;

him ; but there is no such ceremony in use, and exhibitions of this kind, made by the king in public, at no period seem to have suited the genius of this people. Formerly his face was never seen, nor any part of him, excepting sometimes his foot. He sits in a kind of balcony, with lattice-windows and curtains before him. Even yet he covers his face on audiences or public occasions, and when in judgment. On cases of treason, he sits within his balcony, and speaks through a hole in the side of it, to an officer called Kal-Hatzé, the “ voice or word of the king,” by whom he sends his questions, or any thing else that occurs, to the judges who are seated at the council-table.

THE king goes to church regularly, his guards taking possession of every avenue and door through which he is to pass, and nobody is allowed to enter with him, because he is then on foot, excepting two officers of his bed-chamber who support him. He kisses the threshold and side-posts of the church-door, the steps before the altar, and then returns home : sometimes there is service in the church, sometimes there is not ; but he takes no notice of the difference. He rides up stairs into the presence-chamber on a mule, and lights immediately on the carpet before his throne ; and I have sometimes seen great indecencies committed by the said mule in the presence-chamber, upon a Persian carpet.

AN officer called Serach Massery, with a long whip, begins cracking and making a noise, worse than twenty French postillions, at the door of the palace before the dawn of day. This chases away the hyæna and other wild beasts ; this, too, is the signal for the king's rising, who sits in judg-

ment every morning fasting, and after that, about eight o'clock, he goes to breakfast.

THERE are six noblemen of the king's own choosing, who are called Baalomaal\*, or gentlemen of his bed-chamber; four of these are always with him. There is a seventh, who is the chief of these, called Azeleffa el Camissha, groom of the robe, or stole. He is keeper of the king's wardrobe, and the first officer of the bed-chamber. These officers, the black slaves, and some others, serve him as menial servants, and are in a degree of familiarity with him unknown to the rest of the subjects.

WHEN the king sits to consult upon civil matters of consequence, he is shut up in a kind of box opposite to the head of the council table. The persons that deliberate sit at the table, and, according to their rank, give their voices, the youngest or lowest officer always speaking first. The first that give their votes are the Shalaka, or colonels of the household-troops. The second are the great butlers, men that have the charge of the king's drink. The third is the Badjerund, or keeper of that apartment in the palace called the *lion's house*; and after these the keeper of the banqueting-house. The next is called Lika Magwafs, an officer that always goes before the king to hinder the pressure of the crowd. In war, when the king is marching, he rides constantly round him at a certain distance, and carries his shield, and his lance; at least he carries a silver shield, and a lance pointed with the same metal, before such kings as do not choose to expose their person. That, however, was not the case in my time, as the king carried the shield himself, black and unadorned.

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\* Baalomaal, which, literally translated, is, Master of his effects, or goods.

ed, of good buffalo's hide, and his spear sharp-pointed with iron. His silver ornaments were only used when the campaign was over, when these were carried by this officer. Great was the respect shewed formerly to this king in war, and even when engaged in battle with rebels, his own subjects.

No prince ever lost his life in battle till the coming of the Europeans into Abyssinia, when both the excommunicating and murdering of their sovereigns seem to have been introduced at the same time. The reader will see, in the course of this history, two instances of this respect being still kept up : the one at the battle of Limjour, where Fasil, pretending that he was immediately to attack Ras Michael, desired that the king might be dressed in his insignia, lest, not being known, he might be slain by the stranger Galla. The next was after the battle of Serbraxos, where the king was thrice in one day engaged with the Begemder troops for a considerable space of time. These insignia, or marks of royalty, are a white horse, with small silver bells at his head, a shield of silver, and a white fillet of fine silk or muslin, but generally the latter, some inches broad, which is tied round the upper part of the head over his hair, with a large double or bow-knot behind, the ends hanging down to the small of his back, or else flying in the air.

AFTER the Lika Magwafs comes the Palambaras ; after him the Fit-Auraris ; then the Gera Kasmati, and the Kanya Kafmati, their names being derived from their rank or order in encamping, the one on the right, the other on the left of the king's tent ; Kanya and Gera signifying *the right* and *the left* ; after them the Dakakin Billetana Gueta, or the under

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chamberlain.

chamberlain; then the secretary\* for the king's commands; after him the right and left Azages, or generals; after them Rak Massery, after him the basha, after him Kafmati of Damot, then of Samen, then Amhara, and, last of all, Tigrè, before whom stands a golden cup upon a cushion, and he is called Nebrit, as being governor of Axum, or keeper of the book of the law supposed to be there.

AFTER the governor of Tigrè comes the Acab Saat, or guardian of the fire, and the chief ecclesiastical officer of the king's household. Some have said that this officer was appointed to attend the king at the time of eating, and that it was his province to order both meat and drink to be withdrawn whenever he saw the king inclined to excess. If this was really his office, he never used it in my time, nor, as far as I could learn, for several reigns before. Besides, no king eats in public, or before any person but slaves; and he never would chuse that time to commit excess, in which he might be controuled by a subject, even if it was that subject's right to be present when the king eats, as it is not.

AFTER the Acab Saat comes the first master of the household; then the Betwudet, or Ras; last of all the king gives his sentence, which is final, and sends it to the table, from the balcony where he is then sitting, by the officer called, as aforementioned, Kal-Harzè.

WE meet in Abyssinia with various usages, which many have hitherto thought to be peculiar to those ancient nations

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\* Hatzé Azazé.

tions in which they were first observed; others, not so learned, have thought they originated in Abyssinia. I shall first take notice of those that regard the king and court.

THE kings of Persia\*, like these we are speaking of, were eligible in one family only, that of the Arfacidæ, and it was not till that race failed they chose Darius. The title of the king of Abyssinia is, *King of Kings*; and such Daniel† tells us was that of Nebuchadnezzar. The right of primogeniture does not so prevail in Abyssinia as to exclude election in the person of the younger brothers, and this was likewise the case in Persia‡.

IN Persia§ a preference was understood to be due to the king's lawful children; but there were instances of the natural child being preferred to the lawful one. Darius, tho' a bastard, was preferred to Isogius, Xerxes's lawful son, and that merely by the election of the people. The same has always obtained in Abyssinia. A very great part of their kings are adulterous bastards; others are the issue of concubines, as we shall see hereafter, but they have been preferred to the crown by the influence of a party, always under name of the Voice of the People.

ALTHOUGH the Persian kings|| had various palaces to which they removed at different times in the year, Pasagarda, the metropolis of their ancient kings, was observed as the

\* Strabo, lib. xv. p. 783. Joseph. lib. xviii. cap. 3. Procop. lib. i. de Bel Pers.

† Dan. chap. ii. ‡ Procop. lib. i. cap. 11. § Arrian, lib. ii. cap. 14. || Plut.

in Artax. lib. xv. p. 730.

the only place for their coronation ; and this, too, was the case of Abyssinia with their metropolis of Axum.

THE next remarkable ceremony in which these two nations agreed, is that of adoration, inviolably observed in Abyssinia to this day, as often as you enter the sovereign's presence. This is not only kneeling\*, but an absolute prostration. You first fall upon your knees, then upon the palms of your hands, then incline your head and body till your forehead touch the earth ; and, in case you have an answer to expect, you lie in that posture till the king, or somebody from him, desires you to rise. This, too, was the custom of Persia ; Arrian† says this was first instituted by Cyrus, and this was precisely the posture in which they adored God, mentioned in the book of Exodus.

THOUGH the refusal of this ceremony would, in Abyssinia and Persia, be looked upon as rebellion or insult, yet it seems in both nations to have met with a mitigation with regard to strangers, who have refused it without giving any offence. I remember a Mahometan being twice sent by the prince of Mecca into Abyssinia during my stay there, who, neither time, would go farther than to put his hands across upon his breast, with no very great inclination of his head ; and this I saw was not thought so extraordinary as to give offence, as it was all he did to his own sovereign and master.

WE read, indeed, of a very remarkable instance of the dispensing with that ceremony being indirectly, yet plainly,

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\* Lucretius, lib. v. Ovid. Metam. lib. i. Lucian, in Navig.

† Arrian, lib. iv. cap. 11. Exod. chap. 4. Matth. chap. 2.

ly, refused in Persia to strangers. Conon \*, the Athenian, had occasion for an interview with Artaxerxes, king of Persia, upon matters of great concern to both states ; " You shall be introduced to the king by me, says the Persian minister to Conon, without any delay ; do you only first consider with yourself, whether it is really of any consequence that you should speak with the king yourself, or whether it would not be as well for you to convey to him, by letter, any thing you have to say ; for it is absolutely necessary, if you are introduced into the king's presence, that you fall down upon your face and worship him. If this is disagreeable or offensive to you, your business shall nevertheless be equally well and quickly done by me." To which Conon very sensibly replied, " For my part, it never can be offensive *to me* to shew every degree of respect possible to the person of a king. I only am afraid that this salutation may be misinterpreted by my citizens, who, being themselves a sovereign state, may look upon this submission of their ambassador as a reproach to themselves, and inconsistent with their independency." Conon, therefore, desired to wave his introduction, and that his business might be done by letters, which was complied with accordingly.

I HAVE already mentioned transiently the circumstance of the king not being seen when sitting in council. The manner of it is this : When he had business formerly, he sat constantly in a room of his palace, which communicated with the audience and council by two folding doors or large

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\* Justin, lib. vi. Omil. Prob. .



large windows, the bottom of which were about three steps from the ground. These doors, or windows, were latticed with cross bars of wood like a cage, and a thin curtain, or veil of taffety silk was hung within it; so that, upon darkening the inner chamber, the king saw every person in the chamber without, while he himself was not seen at all. Justin \* tells us, that the person of the king of Persia was hid to give a greater idea of his majesty; and under Deioces, king of the Medes, a law was made that nobody might look upon the king; but the constant wars in which Abyssinia has been engaged, since the Mahometans took possession of Adel, have occasioned this troublesome custom to be wholly laid aside, unless on particular public occasions, and at council, when they are still observed with the ancient strictness. And we find, in the history of Abyssinia, that the army and kingdom have often owed their safety to the personal behaviour and circumstance of the king distinguishing and exposing himself in battle, which advantage they must have lost had the ancient custom been observed. However, to this day, when he is abroad riding, or sitting in any of his apartments at home where people are admitted, his head and forehead are perfectly covered, and one of his hands covers his mouth, so that nothing but his eyes are seen; his feet, too, are always covered.

WE learn from Apuleus, that this was a custom in Persia; and this gave an opportunity to the magi to place Oropastus, the brother of Cambyfes, upon the throne, instead of Merdis who should have succeeded; but the covering of the face made the difference pass unperceived.

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\* Justin, lib. 2.

It is the constant practice in Abyssinia to beset the king's doors and windows within his hearing, and there, from early morning to night, to cry for justice as loud as possible, in a distressed and complaining tone, and in all the different languages they are masters of, in order to their being admitted to have their supposed grievances heard. In a country so ill governed as Abyssinia is, and so perpetually involved in war, it may be easily supposed there is no want of people, who have real injuries and violence to complain of : But if it were not so, this is so much the constant usage, that when it happens (as in the midst of the rainy season) that few people can approach the capital, or stand without in such bad weather, a set of vagrants are provided, maintained, and paid, whose sole business it is to cry and lament, as if they had been really very much injured and oppressed ; and this they tell you is for the king's honour, that he may not be lonely by the palace being too quiet. This, of all their absurd customs, was the most grievous and troublesome to me ; and, from a knowledge that it was so, the king, when he was private, often permitted himself a piece of rather odd diversion to be a royal one.

THERE would sometimes, while I was busy in my room in the rainy season, be four or five hundred people, who all at once would begin, some roaring and crying, as if they were in pain, others demanding justice, as if they were that moment suffering, or if in the instant to be put to death ; and some groaning and sobbing as if just expiring ; and this horrid symphony was so artfully performed that no ear could distinguish but that it proceeded from real distress. I was often so surprised as to send the soldiers at the door to bring in one of them, thinking him come from the country,

to examine who had injured him ; many a time he was a servant of my own, or some other equally known ; or, if he was a stranger, upon asking him what misfortune had befallen him, he would answer very composedly, Nothing was the matter with him ; that he had been sleeping all day with the horses ; that hearing from the soldiers at the door I was retired to my apartment, he and his companions had come to cry and make a noise under my window, to do me *honour* before the people, for fear I should be melancholy, by being too quiet when alone ; and therefore hoped that I would order them drink, that they might continue with a little more spirit. The violent anger which this did often put me into did not fail to be punctually reported to the king, at which he would laugh heartily ; and he himself was often hid not far off, for the sake of being a spectator of my heavy displeasure.

THESE complaints, whether real or feigned, have always for their burden, *Reté O Jan boi*, which, repeated quick, very much resembles Prete Janni, the name that was given to this prince, of which we never yet knew the derivation ; its signification is, " Do me justice, O my king ! "

HERODOTUS \* tells us, that in Persia, the people, in great crowds and of both sexes, come roaring and crying to the doors of the palace ; and Intaphernes is also said to come to the door of the king making great lamentations.

I HAVE mentioned a council of state held in Abyssinia in time of danger or difficulty, where the king sitting invisible, though present, gives his opinion by an officer called Kal-Hatzè. Upon his delivering the sentence from the king the whole assembly rise, and stand upon their feet; and this they must have done the whole time the council lasted had the king appeared there in person. According to the circumstances of the time, the king goes with the majority, or not; and if, upon a division, there is a majority against him, he often punishes the majority on the other side, by sending them to prison for voting against his sentiments; for tho' it is understood, by calling of the meeting, that the majority is to determine as to the eligibility of the measure, the king, by his prerogative, supercedes any majority on the other side, and so far, I suppose, has been an encroachment upon the original constitution. This I understand was the same in Persia.

XERXES \*, being about to declare war against the Greeks, assembled all the principal chiefs of Asia in council. "That I may not, says he, be *thought* to *act* only by my own judgment, I have called you together. At the same time, I think proper to intimate to you, that it is your duty to obey my will, rather than enter into any deliberation or remonstrances of your own."

WE will now compare some particulars, the dress and ornaments of the two kings. The king of Abyssinia wears his hair long; so did the ancient kings of Persia. We learn

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this

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\* Herod. lib. vi.

this circumstance from Suetonius and Aurelius Victor\*. A comet had appeared in the war with Persia, and was looked upon by the Romans as a bad omen. Vespasian laughed at it, and said, if it portended any ill it was to the king of Persia, because, *like him*, it wore long hair.

THE diadem was, with the Persians, a mark of royalty, as with the Abyssinians, being composed of the same materials, and worn in the same manner. The king of Abyssinia wears it, while marching, as a mark of sovereignty, that does not impede or incommode him, as any other heavier ornament would do; especially in hot weather. This fillet furrounds his head above the hair, leaving the crown perfectly uncovered. It is an offence of the first magnitude for any person, at this time, to wear any thing upon his head, especially white, unless for Mahometans, who wear caps, and over them a large white turban; or for priests, who wear large turbans of muslin also.

THIS was the diadem of the Persians, as appears from Lucian †, who calls it a white fillet about the forehead. In the dialogue between Diogenes and Alexander, the head is said to be tied round with a white fillet ‡; and Favorinus, speaking of Pompey, whose leg was wound round with a white bandage, says, It is no matter on what part of the body he wears a diadem. We read in Justin ||, that Alexander, leaping from his horse, by accident wounded Lyfimachus in the forehead with the point of his spear, and the blood  
gushed

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\* Suet. Vespas. cap. 23, Sex. Aurel. Victor, cap. 23. † Lucian. de Votis seu in Næ-  
vigio, Efdras, lib. iii. ‡ Valer. Maxim. lib. vi. cap. 2. || Justin lib. xv.

gushed out so violently that it could not be stanchèd, till the king took the diadem from his head, and with it bound up the wound; which at that time was looked upon as an omen that Lyfimachus was to be king, and so it soon after happened.

THE kings of Abyssinia anciently sat upon a gold throne, which is a large, convenient, oblong, square seat, like a small bedstead, covered with Persian carpets, damask, and cloth of gold, with steps leading up to it. It is still richly gilded; but the many revolutions and wars have much abridged their ancient magnificence. The portable throne was a gold stool, like that curule stool or chair used by the Romans, which we see on medals. It was, in the Begemder war, changed to a very beautiful one of the same form inlaid with gold. Xerxes is said to have been spectator of a naval fight sitting upon a gold stool\*.

It is, in Abyssinia, high-treason to sit upon any seat of the king's; and he that presumed to do this would be instantly hewn to pieces, if there was not some other collateral proof of his being a madman. The reader will find, in the course of my history, a very ridiculous accident on this subject, in the king's tent, with Guangoul, king of the Bertuma Galla.

It is probable that Alexander had heard of this law in Persia, and disapproved of it; for one day, it being extremely cold, the king, sitting in his chair before the fire, warming

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\* Philoſtrat. lib. ii.

ing and chaffing his legs, saw a soldier, probably a Persian, who had lost his feeling by extreme numbness. The king immediately leaped from his chair, and ordered the soldier to be set down upon it. The fire soon brought him to his senses, but he had almost lost them again with fear, by finding himself in the king's seat. To whom Alexander said, "Remember, and distinguish, how much more advantageous to man my government is than that of the kings of Persia\*. By sitting down on my seat, you have saved your life; by sitting on theirs, you would infallibly have lost it."

IN Abyssinia it is considered as a fundamental law of the land, that none of the royal family, who has any deformity or bodily defect, shall be allowed to succeed to the crown; and, for this purpose, any of the princes, who may have escaped from the mountain of Wechnè, and who are afterwards taken, are mutilated in some of their members, that thus they may be disqualified from ever succeeding. In Persia the same was observed. Procopius † tells us, that Zames, the son of Cabades, was excluded from the throne because he was blind of one eye, the law of Persia prohibiting any person that had a bodily defect to be elected king.

THE kings of Abyssinia were seldom seen by their subjects. Justin ‡ says, the Persians hid the person of their king to increase their reverence for his majesty. And it was a law of Deioces §, king of the Medes, that nobody should be permitted

\* Val. Max. lib. v. cap. 16.—Q. Curt. lib. viii.

† Procop. lib. i. cap. 11.

‡ Justin. lib. i.

§ Herod. lib. i.

permitted to see the king ; which regulation was as ancient as the time of Semiramis, whose son, Ninyas, is said to have grown old in the palace, without ever having been known by being seen out of it.

THIS absurd usage gave rise to many abuses. In Persia\* it produced two officers, who were called the king's eyes, and the king's ear, and who had the dangerous employment, I mean dangerous for the subject, of seeing and hearing for their sovereign. In Abyssinia, as I have just said, it created an officer called the king's mouth, or voice, for, being seen by nobody, he spoke of course in the third person, "*Hear what the king says to you*, which is the usual form of all regal mandates in Abyssinia; and what follows has the force of law. In the same style, Josephus thus begins an edict of Cyrus king of Persia, "Cyrus the king says†,"—And speaking of Cambyfes's rescript, "Cambyfes the *king says thus*,"—And Esdras' also, "Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia‡,"—And Nebuchadnezzar says to Holofernes, "Thus saith the Great King, Lord of the whole earth§,"—and this was probably the origin of *edicts*, when writing was little used by sovereigns, and little understood by the subject.

SOLEMN hunting-matches were always in use both with the kings of Abyssinia and those of Persia ||. In both kingdoms it was a crime for a subject to strike the game till such time as the king had thrown his lance at it. This absurd custom was repealed by Artaxerxes Longimanus in one kingdom ;

\* Dio. Chrysost. Orat. 3. pro regno.

† Joseph. lib. xi. cap. 1.

‡ Esdras, cap. 5.

§ Judith, cap. 2.

|| Ctesias in Persicis. Xenophon, lib. i.



kingdom\*, and by Yafous the Great in the other, so late as the beginning of the last century.

THE kings of Abyssinia are above all laws. They are supreme in all causes ecclesiastical and civil; the land and persons of their subjects are equally their property, and every inhabitant of their kingdom is born their slave; if he bears a higher rank it is by the king's gift; for his nearest relations are accounted nothing better. The same obtained in Persia. Aristotle calls the Persian generals and nobles, slaves of the great king†. Xerxes, reproving Pytheus the Lydian when seeking to excuse one of his sons from going to war, says, "You that are my slave, and bound to follow me with your wife and all your family‡."—And Gobryas§ says to Cyrus, "I deliver myself to you, at once your companion and your slave."

THERE are several kinds of bread in Abyssinia, some of different sorts of teff, and some of tocusso, which also vary in quality. The king of Abyssinia eats of wheat bread, though not of every wheat, but of that only that grows in the province of Dembea, therefore called the king's food. It was so with the kings of Persia, who ate wheat bread, Herodotus says, but only of a particular kind, as we learn from Strabo ||.

I HAVE shewn, in the course of the foregoing history, that it always has been, and still is the custom of the kings of  
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Abyssinia

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\* Plutarch, in Apothegmat. † De Mundo. ‡ Herod lib. vii. § Xenoph. lib. iv. || Strabo lib. xv.

Abyssinia, to marry what number of wives they choose; that these were not, therefore, all queens; but that among them there was one who was considered particularly as queen, and upon her head was placed the crown, and she was called Iteghè.

Thus, in Persia, we read that Ahasuerus loved Esther\*, who had found grace in his sight more than the other virgins, and he had placed a golden crown upon her head. And Josephus † informs us, that, when Esther‡ was brought before the king, he was exceedingly delighted with her, and made her his lawful wife, and when she came into the palace he put a crown upon her head: whether placing the crown upon the queen's head had any civil effect as to regency in Persia as it had in Abyssinia, is what history does not inform us.

I HAVE already observed, that there is an officer called Serach Massery, who watches before the king's gate all night, and at the dawn of day cracks a whip to chace the wild beasts out of the town. This, too, is the signal for the king to rise, and sit down in his judgment-seat. The same custom was observed in Persia. Early in the morning an officer entered the king's chamber, and said to him "A-rise, O king! and take charge of those matters which Oromasdes has appointed you to the care of."

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\* Esther, chap. vi.

† Joseph. lib. xi. cap. 6.

‡ If I remember right, it is D. Prideaux that says Esther is a Persian word, of no signification. I rather think it is Abyssinian, because it has a signification in that language. *Ethé*, the masculine, signifies an agreeable present, and is a proper name, of which Esther is the feminine.

THE king of Abyssinia never is seen to walk, nor to set his foot upon the ground, out of his palace; and when he would dismount from the horse or mule on which he rides, he has a servant with a stool, who places it properly for him for that purpose. He rides into the anti-chamber to the foot of his throne, or to the stool placed in the alcove of his tent. We are told by Athenæus \*, such was the practice in Persia, whose king never set his foot upon the ground out of his palace.

THE king of Abyssinia very often judges capital crimes himself. It is reckoned a favourable judicature, such as, Claudian says, that of a king in person should be, "*Piger ad pœnas, ad præmia velox.*" No man is condemned by the king in person to die for the first fault, unless the crime be of a horrid nature, such as parricide or sacrilege. And, in general, the life and merits of the prisoner are weighed against his immediate guilt; so that if his first behaviour has had more merit towards the state than his present delinquency is thought to have injured it, the one is placed fairly against the other, and the accused is generally absolved when the sovereign judges alone.

HERODOTUS † praises this as a maxim of the kings of Persia in capital judgments, almost in the very words that I have just now used; and he gives an instance of it:—Darius had condemned Sandoces, one of the king's judges, to be crucified for corruption, that is, for having given false judgment for a bribe. The man was already hung up on the cross, when the king, considering with himself how many  
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\* Athen, lib. xii. cap. 2.

† Herod, lib. vii.

good services he had done, previous to this, the only offence which he had committed, ordered him to be pardoned.

THE Persian king, in all expeditions, was attended by judges. We find in Herodotus \*, that, in the expedition of Cambyfes, ten of the principal Egyptians were condemned to die by these judges for every Persian that had been slain by the people of Memphis. Six judges always attend the king of Abyssinia to the camp, and, before them, rebels taken on the field are tried and punished on the spot.

PEOPLE that the king distinguished by favour, or for any public action, were in both kingdoms presented with gold chains, swords, and bracelets †. These in Abyssinia are understood to be chiefly rewards of military service; yet Poncet received a gold chain from Yafous the Great. The day before the battle of Serbraxos, Ayto Engedan received a silver bridle and saddle, covered with silver plates, from Ras Michael; and the night after that battle I was myself honoured with a gold chain from the king upon my reconciliation with Guebra Mascall, who, for his behaviour that day, had a large revenue most deservedly assigned to him, and a considerable territory, consisting of a number of rich villages, a present known to be more agreeable to him than a mere mark of honour.

A STRANGER of fashion, particularly recommended as I was, not needy in point of money, nor depending from day to day upon government for subsistence, is generally provided

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Herod. lib. iii.

† Xenoph. lib. i. Xenoph. lib. viii.

ded with one or more villages to furnish him with what articles he may need, without being obliged to have recourse to the king or his ministers for every necessary. Amha Yafous, prince of Shoa, had a large and a royal village, Emfras, given him to supply him with food for his table; he had another village in Karoota for wine; a village in Dembea, the king's own province, for his wheat; and another in Begemder for cotton cloths for his servants; and so of the rest. After I was in the king's service I had the villages that belonged to the posts I occupied; and one called Geesh, in which arises the sources of the Nile, a village of about 18 houses, given me by the king at my own request; for I might have had a better to furnish me with honey, and confirmed to me by the rebel Waragna Fasil, who never suffered me to grow rich by my rents, having never allowed me to receive but two large jars, so bitter with lupines that they were of no sort of use to me. I was a gentle master, nor ever likely to be opulent from the revenues of that country; and more especially so, as I had under me, as my lieutenant\*, an officer commanding the horse, whose thoughts were much more upon Jerusalem and the holy sepulchre than any gains he could get in Abyssinia by his employments.

THUCYDIDES † informs us, that Themistocles had received great gifts from Artaxerxes king of Persia, when settled at Magnesia; the king had given him that city for bread, Lamp-  
facus

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\* Ammonios, Bill tana Gueta to Ayto Confu.

† Thucyd. lib. i. Strabo, lib. xiv. Theod. Sic. lib. xi.

facus for wine, and Myuns to furnish him with victuals. To these Athenaeus adds two more, Palæſcepsis and Percope, to yield him clothing and furniture. This precisely, to this day, is the Abyssinian idea, when they conceive they are entertaining men of rank ; for strangers, that come naked and vagabond among them, without name and character, or means of subsistence, such as the Greeks in Abyssinia, are always received as beggars, and neglected as such, till hunger sets their wits to work to provide for the present exigency, and low intrigues and practices are employed afterwards to maintain them in the little advancements which they have acquired, but no honour or confidence follows, or very rarely.

IN Abyssinia, when the prisoner is condemned in capital cases, he is not again remitted to prison, which is thought cruel, but he is immediately carried away, and the sentence executed upon him. I have given several instances of this in the annals of the country. Abba Salama, the Acab Saat, was condemned by the king the morning he entered Gondar, on his return from Tigré, and immediately hanged, in the garment of a priest, on a tree at the door of the king's palace. Chremation, brother to the usurper Socinios, was executed that same morning; Guebra Denghel, Ras Michael's son-in-law, was likewise executed that same day, immediately after judgment; and so were several others. The same was the practice in Persia, as we learn from Xenophon \*, and more plainly from Diodorus †.

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\* Xenoph. lib. i.

† Diod. lib. xii.

THE capital punishments in Abyssinia are the cross. Socinius \* first ordered Arzo, his competitor, who had fled for assistance and refuge to Phineas king of the Falasha, to be crucified without the camp. We find the same punishment inflicted by Artaxerxes upon Haman †, who was ordered to be affixed to the cross till he died. And Polycrates of Samos, Cicero tells us ‡, was crucified by order of Orætis, prætor of Darius.

THE next capital punishment is flaying alive. That this barbarous execution still prevails in Abyssinia is already proved by the fate of the unfortunate Woosheka, taken prisoner in the campaign of 1769 while I was in Abyssinia; a sacrifice made to the vengeance of the beautiful Ozoro Esther, who, kind and humane as she was in other respects, could receive no atonement for the death of her husband. Socrates § says, that Manes the heretic was flayed alive by order of the king of Persia, and his skin made into a bottle. And Procopius || informs us, that Pacurius ordered Basicius to be flayed alive, and his skin made into a bottle and hung upon a high tree. And Agathias \* mentions, that the same punishment was inflicted upon Nachorages *more majorum*, according to ancient custom.

LAPIDATION, or stoning to death, is the next capital punishment in Abyssinia. This is chiefly inflicted upon strangers called *Franks*, for religious causes. The Catholic priests

\* Vide annals of Abyssinia, life of Socinius.

† Cicero, lib. v. de Finib.

‡ Procop. lib. i. cap. 5. de Bell. Pers.

§ Esther, chap. vii. and viii.

|| Ecclesiast. Histor. chap. xxii.

\* Agath. lib. iii.

priests in Abyssinia that have been detected there, in these latter days, have been stoned to death, and their bodies lie still in the streets of Gondar, in the squares or waste-places, covered with the heaps of stones which occasioned their death by being thrown at them. There are three of these heaps at the church of Abbo, all covering Franciscan friars; and, besides them, a small pyramid over a boy who was stoned to death with them, about the first year of the reign of David the IV. \* This boy was one of four sons that one of the Franciscan friars had had by an Abyssinian woman in the reign of Ouslas. In Persia we find, that Pagorasus (according to Ctesias †) was stoned to death by the order of the king; and the same author says, that Pharnacyas, one of the murderers of Xerxes, was stoned to death likewise.

AMONG capital punishments may be reckoned likewise the plucking out of the eyes, a cruelty which I have but too often seen committed in the short stay that I made in Abyssinia. This is generally inflicted upon rebels. I have already mentioned, that, after the slaughter of the battle of Fagitta, twelve chiefs of the Pagan Galla, taken prisoners by Ras Michael, had their eyes torn out, and were afterwards abandoned to starve in the valleys below the town. Several prisoners of another rank, noblemen of Tigré, underwent the same misfortune; and, what is wonderful, not one of them died in the operation, nor its consequences, though performed in the coarsest manner with an iron forceps, or pincers.

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See this history of Abyssinia in vit. David IV.

† Vide Ctesiani Hecetii.



Xenophon \* tells us, that this was one of the punishments used by Cyrus. And Ammianus Marcellinus † mentions, that Sapor king of Persia banished Arfaces, whom he had taken prisoner to a certain castle, after having pulled out his eyes.

THE dead bodies of criminals slain for treason, murder, and violence, on the high-way at certain times, are seldom buried in Abyssinia. The streets of Gondar are strewed with pieces of their carcases, which bring the wild beasts in multitudes into the city as soon as it becomes dark, so that it is scarcely possible for any to walk in the night. Too many instances of this kind will be found throughout my narrative. The dogs used to bring pieces of human bodies into the house, and court-yard, to eat them in greater security. This was most disgustful to me, but so often repeated, that I was obliged to leave them in possession of such fragments. We learn from Quintus Curtius ‡, that Darius having ordered Charidamus to be put to death, and finding afterwards that he was innocent, endeavoured to stop the executioner, though it was too late, as they had already cut his throat; but, in token of repentance, the king allowed him the liberty of burial.

I HAVE taken notice, up and down throughout my history, that the Abyssinians never fight in the night. This too was a rule among the Persians ||.

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\* Xenoph. lib. i.

† Amm. Mar. lib. vii.

‡ Q. Curt. lib. iii. 2. 19.

|| Q. Curt. v. 12.

NOTWITHSTANDING the Abyssinians were so anciently and nearly connected with Egypt, they never seem to have made use of paper, or papyrus, but imitated the practice of the Persians, who wrote upon skins, and they do so this day. This arises from their having early been Jews. In Parthia, likewise, Pliny \* informs us, the use of papyrus was absolutely unknown; and though it was discovered that papyrus grew in the Euphrates, near Babylon, of which they could make paper, they obstinately rather chose to adhere to their ancient custom of weaving their letters on cloth of which they made their garments. The Persians, moreover, made use of parchment for their records †, to which all their remarkable transactions were trusted; and to this it is probably owing we have so many of their customs preserved to this day. Diodorus Siculus ‡, speaking of Ctesias, says, he verified every thing from the royal parchments themselves, which, in obedience to a certain law, are all placed in order, and afterwards were communicated to the Greeks.

FROM this great resemblance in customs between the Persians and Abyssinians following the fashionable way of judging about the origin of nations, I should boldly conclude that the Abyssinians were a colony of Persians, but this is very well known to be without foundation. The customs, mentioned as only peculiar to Persia, were common to all the east; and they were lost when those countries were over-run and conquered by those who introduced barbarous customs of their own. The reason why we have so much

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\* Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. xiii. cap. 11.

† Plin. lib. xiii. cap. 11.

‡ Diod. Sic. lib. ii.

left of the Persian customs is, that they were written, and so not liable to alteration ; and, being on parchment, did also contribute to their preservation. The history which treats of those ancient and polished nations has preserved few fragments of their manners entire from the ruins of time ; while Abyssinia, at war with nobody, or at war with itself only, has preserved the ancient customs which it enjoyed in common with all the east, and which were only lost in other kingdoms by the invasion of strangers, a misfortune Abyssinia has never suffered since the introduction of letters.

BEFORE I finish what I have to say upon the manners of this nation, having shewn that they are the same people with the ancient Egyptians, I would inquire, whether there is the same conformity of rules in the dietetique regimen, between them and Egypt, that we should expect to find from such relation ? This is a much surer way of judging than by resemblance of external customs.

THE old Egyptians, as we are told by sacred scripture, did not eat with strangers ; but I believe the observation is extended farther than ever scripture meant. The instance given of Joseph's brethren not being allowed to eat with the Egyptians was, because Joseph had told Pharaoh that his brethren \*, and Jacob his father, were shepherds, that he might get from the Egyptians the land of Goshen, a land, as the name imports, of pasturage and grass, which the Nile never overflowed, and it was therefore in possession of the shepherds.

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\* Genesis, chap. xlvii. ver. 4.

shepherds. Now the shepherds, we are told, were the direct natural enemies of the Egyptians who lived in towns. The shepherds also sacrificed the god whom the Egyptians worshipped. We cannot (says Moses \*) sacrifice in this land the abomination of the Egyptians, lest they stone us. If the Egyptians did not eat with them, so neither would they with the Egyptians; but it is a mistake that the Egyptians did not eat flesh as well as the shepherds, it was only the flesh of certain animals they differed on, and did not eat.

THE Egyptians worshipped the cow †, and the shepherds lived upon her flesh, which made them a separate people, that could not eat nor communicate together; and the very knowledge of this was, as we are informed by scripture, the reason why Joseph told Pharaoh, when he asked him what profession his brethren were of, "Your servants, says Joseph, are shepherds, and their employment the feeding of cattle;" and this was given out, that the land of Goshen might be allotted to them, and so they and their descendants be kept separate from the Egyptians, and not exposed to mingle in their abominations. Or, though they had abstained from these abominations, they could not kill cattle for sacrifice or for food. They would have raised ill-will against themselves, and, as Moses says, would have been stoned, and so the end of bringing them to Goshen would have been frustrated, which was to nurse them in a plentiful land, in peace and security, till they should attain to be a mighty people, capable of subduing and filling the land to which, at the end of their captivity, God was to lead them.

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\* Exod. chap. viii. ver. 26.

† Herod. lib. ii. p. 104. sec. 40.

THE Abyssinians neither eat nor drink with strangers, though they have no reason for this ; and it is now a mere prejudice, because the old occasion for this regulation is lost. They break, or purify, however, every vessel a stranger of any kind shall have ate or drank in. The custom then is copied from the Egyptians, and they have preserved it, tho' the Egyptian reason does no longer hold.

SOME historians say, the Egyptian women anciently enjoyed a full liberty of intercourse with the males, which was not the case in the generality of eastern nations ; and we must, therefore, think it was derived from Abyssinia ; for there the women live, as it were, in common, and their enjoyments and gratification have no other bounds but their own will. They, however, pretend to have a principle, that, if they marry, they should be wives of one husband ; and yet this principle does not bind, but, like most of the other duties, serves to reason upon, and to laugh at, in conversation. Herodotus tells it was the same with the Egyptians\*.

THE Egyptians made no account of the mother what her state was ; if the father was free, the child followed the condition of the father. This is strictly so in Abyssinia. The king's child by a negro-slave, bought with money, or taken in war, is as near in succeeding to the crown, as any one of twenty children that he has older than that one, and born of the noblest women of the country.

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\* Herodot. p. 121. sect. 92.

THE men in Egypt\* did neither buy nor sell; the same is the case in Abyssinia at this day. It is infamy for a man to go to market to buy any thing. He cannot carry water or bake bread; but he must wash the cloaths belonging to both sexes, and, in this function, the women cannot help him. In Abyssinia the men carried their burdens on their heads, the women on their shoulders, and this difference, we are told, obtained in Egypt†. It is plain, that this buying, in the public market, by women, must have ended whenever jealousy or sequestration of that sex began; for this reason it ended early in Egypt, but, for the opposite reason, it subsists in Abyssinia to this day.

It was a sort of impiety in Egypt to eat a calf; and the reason was plain, they worshipped the cow. In Abyssinia, to this day, no man eats veal, although every one very willingly eats a cow. The Egyptian‡ reason no longer subsists as in the former case, but the prejudice remains, though they have forgot the reason.

THE Abyssinians eat no wild or water-fowl, not even the goose, which was a great delicacy in Egypt. The reason of this is, that, upon their conversion to Judaism, they were forced to relinquish their ancient municipal customs, as far as they were contrary to the Mosaical law; and the animals, in their country, not corresponding in form, kind, nor name, with those mentioned in the Septuagint, or original Hebrew, it

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\* Herodot. lib. ii. p. 101. sect. 35.

† Herodot. lib. ii. p. 101. sect. 35.

‡ Herodot. lib. ii. p. 104. sect. 41.

it has followed, that there are many of each class that know not whether they are clean or not; and a wonderful confusion and uncertainty has followed through ignorance or mistake, being unwilling to violate the law in any one instance through not understanding it.

THE abhorrence of the old Egyptians for the bean is well known, and many silly reasons have been assigned for it; but that which has most met the approbation of the most learned men is, in my humble opinion, the weakest of them all. They say, the aversion to the bean arose from its resembling the phallus; but the crux ansata, or the cross with the handle to it, which is put in the hand of every Egyptian hieroglyphic of Isis, Osiris, or whatever the priests have called them, is likewise agreed by the learned to represent the phallus; and the figure of these nudities, without vail or concealment, is plain in all their statues. Now, I would ask, What is the reason why they abhor a bean because it represents these parts which, at the same time, by their own option or choice, are exposed in the hand or person of every figure which they exhibit to public view? The bean, however, is not cultivated in Abyssinia, neither is it in Egypt; lupines grow up in both, and lupines in both are eradicated like a weed, and lupines were what is called *faba Egyptiaca*.

THOUGH I cannot pretend to know the true reason of this, yet I will venture to give a guess:—The origin of great part of religious observances of Egypt began with the worship of the Nile, and probably at the head of it. The country of the Agows, as well where the Nile rises as in parts more distant, is all a honey country; not only their whole sustenance,

sustenance, but their trade, their tribute to the king, and the maintenance of a great part of the capital, depends upon honey and butter, the common food of the better sort of people when they do not eat flesh; it composes their drink also in mead or hydromel. Now, this country, when uncultivated, naturally produces lupines, and the blossoms of these becoming food for the bees, gives the honey such a bitterness that no person will eat it, or use it any way in food or for drink.—After the king had bestowed the village of Geesh upon me, though with the consent of Fasil its governor, that egregious shuffler, to make the present of no use to me, sent me, indeed, the tribute of the honey in very large jars, but it all tasted so much of the lupines that it was of no earthly use whatever. Their constant attention is to weed out this bitter plant; and, when any of those countries are desolated by war, we may expect a large crop of lupines immediately to follow, and, for a time, plenty of bad honey in consequence. It is, then, this destructive bean that Pythagoras, who, it is said, ate no flesh, regarded as an object of detestation; it was equally so among the Abyssinians and Egyptians for the same reason. Both nations, moreover, have an aversion to hogs flesh, and both avoid the touch of dogs..

It is here I propose to take notice of an unnatural custom which prevails universally in Abyssinia, and which in early ages seems to have been common to the whole world. I did not think that any person of moderate knowledge in profane learning could have been ignorant of this remarkable custom among the nations of the east. But what still more surprised me, and is the least pardonable part of the whole, was the ignorance of part of the law of God, the earliest



that was given to man, the most frequently noted, insisted upon, and prohibited. I have said, in the course of the narrative of my journey from Masuah, that, a small distance from Axum, I overtook on the way three travellers, who seemed to be soldiers, driving a cow before them. They halted at a brook, threw down the beast, and one of them cut a pretty large collop of flesh from its buttocks, after which they drove the cow gently on as before. A violent outcry was raised in England at hearing this circumstance, which they did not hesitate to pronounce *impossible*, when the manners and customs of Abyssinia were to them utterly unknown. The jesuits, established in Abyssinia for above a hundred years, had told them of that people eating, what they call raw meat, in every page, and yet they were ignorant of this. Poncet, too, had done the same, but Poncet they had not read; and if any writer upon Ethiopia had omitted to mention it, it was because it was one of those facts too notorious to be repeated to swell a volume.

It must be from prejudice alone we condemn the eating of raw flesh; no precept, divine or human, that I know, forbids it; and if it is true, as later travellers have discovered, that there are nations ignorant of the use of fire, any law against eating raw flesh could never have been intended by God as obligatory upon mankind in general. At any rate, it is certainly not clearly known, whether the eating raw flesh was not an earlier and more general practice than by preparing it with fire; I think it was.

MANY wise and learned men have doubted whether it was at first permitted to man to eat animal food at all. I do not pretend to give any opinion upon the subject, but

many topics have been maintained successfully upon much more slender grounds. God, the author of life, and the best judge of what was proper to maintain it, gave this regimen to our first parents—"Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed: to you it shall be for meat \*." And though, immediately after, he mentions both beasts and fowls, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth, he does not say that he has designed any of these as meat for man. On the contrary, he seems to have intended the vegetable creation as food for both man and beast—"And to every beast of the earth and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein *there is life*, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so †." After the flood, when mankind began to repossess the earth, God gave Noah a much more extensive permission—"Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things ‡."

As the criterion of judging of their aptitude for food was declared to be their *moving* and having *life*, a danger appeared of misinterpretation, and that these creatures should be used living; a thing which God by no means intended, and therefore, immediately after, it is said, "But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall you not eat §;" or, as it is rendered by the best interpreters, 'Flesh, or members, torn from living animals having the blood in them, thou shalt not eat.' We see then, by this prohibition, that

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\* Gen. chap. i. ver. 29. † Gen. chap. i. ver. 30. ‡ Gen. chap. ix. ver. 3. § Gen. chap. ix. v. 4.

this abuse of eating living meat, or part of animals while yet alive, was known in the days of Noah, and forbidden after being so known, and it is precisely what is practised in Abyssinia to this day. This law, then, was prior to that of Moses, but it came from the same legislator. It was given to Noah, and consequently obligatory upon the whole world. Moses, however, insists upon it throughout his whole law; which not only shews that this abuse was common, but that it was deeply rooted in, and interwoven with, the manners of the Hebrews. He positively prohibits it four times in one chapter in Deuteronomy \*, and thrice in one of the chapters of Leviticus †—"Thou shalt not eat the blood, for the blood is the life; thou shalt pour it upon the earth like water."

ALTHOUGH the many instances of God's tenderness to the brute creation, that constantly occur in the Mosaic precepts, and are a very beautiful part of them, and tho' the barbarity of the custom itself might reasonably lead us to think that humanity alone was a sufficient motive for the prohibition of eating animals alive, yet nothing can be more certain, than that greater consequences were annexed to the indulging in this crime than what was apprehended from a mere depravity of manners. One ‡ of the most learned and sensible men that ever wrote upon the sacred scriptures observes, that God, in forbidding this practice, uses more severe certification, and more threatening language, than against any other sin, excepting idolatry, with which it is constantly joined. God declares, "I will set my face against him that eateth blood, in the same manner as I will against him that sacrificeth his son to Moloch; I will  
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\* Deut. chap. xii.

† Levit. chap. xvii.

‡ Maimon. more. Nebochim.

“ set my face against him that eateth flesh with blood, till I  
 “ cut him off from the people.”

WE have an instance in the life of Saul \* that shews the propensity of the Israelites to this crime. Saul's army, after a battle, *flew*, that is, fell voraciously upon the cattle they had taken, and threw them upon the ground to cut off their flesh, and eat them raw, so that the army was defiled by eating blood, or living animals. To prevent this, Saul caused roll to him a great stone, and ordered those that killed their oxen to cut their throats upon that stone. This was the only lawful way of killing animals for food ; the tying of the ox and throwing it upon the ground was not permitted as equivalent. The Israelites did probably in that case as the Abyssinians do at this day ; they cut a part of its throat, so that blood might be seen upon the ground, but nothing mortal to the animal followed from that wound. But, after laying his head upon a large stone, and cutting his throat, the blood fell from on high, or was poured on the ground like water, and sufficient evidence appeared the creature was dead before it was attempted to eat it. We have seen that the Abyssinians came from Palestine a very few years after this ; and we are not to doubt that they then carried with them this, with many other Jewish customs, which they have continued to this day.

THE author I last quoted says, that it is plain, from all the books of the eastern nations, that their motive for eating flesh with the life, or limbs of living animals cut off with

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\* 1 Sam. chap. xiv. ver. 32. 33.

the blood, was from motives of religion, and for the purposes of idolatry, and so it probably had been among the Jews ; for one of the reasons given in Leviticus for the prohibition of eating blood, or living flesh, is, that the people may no longer offer sacrifices to devils, after whom they have gone a-whoring \*. If the reader chooses to be further informed how very common this practice was, he need only read the Halacoth Gedaloth, or its translation, where the whole chapter is taken up with instances of this kind.

THAT this practice likewise prevailed in Europe, as well as in Asia and Africa, may be collected from various authors. The Greeks had their bloody feasts and sacrifices where they ate living flesh ; these were called Omophagia. Arnobius † says, “ Let us pass over the horrid scenes presented at the Baccahanlian feast, wherein, with a counterfeited fury, though with a truly depraved heart, you twine a number of serpents around you, and, pretending to be possessed with some god, or spirit, you tear to pieces, with bloody mouths, the bowels of living goats, which cry all the time from the torture they suffer.” From all this it appears, that the practice of the Abyssinians eating live animals at this day, was very far from being new, or, what was nonsensically said, *impossible*. And I shall only further observe, that those of my readers that wish to indulge a spirit of criticism upon the great variety of customs, men and manners, related in this history, or have those criticisms attended to, should furnish themselves with a more decent stock of reading than, in this.

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\* Levit. chap. xvii. ver. 7.

† Arnob. adv. Gent. Clem. Alexan. Sextus Impiricus, lib. iii. cap. 25. and Selden. de Jure Natur. and Gent. cap. 1. lib. vii.

this instance, they seem to have possessed ; or, when another example occurs of that kind, which they call *impossible*, that they would take the truth of it upon my word, and believe what they are not sufficiently qualified to investigate.

CONSISTENT with the plan of this work, which is to describe the manners of the several nations through which I passed, good and bad, as I observed them, I cannot avoid giving some account of this Polyphemus banquet, as far as decency will permit me ; it is part of the history of a barbarous people ; whatever I might wish, I cannot decline it.

IN the capital, where one is safe from surprise at all times, or in the country or villages, when the rains have become so constant that the valleys will not bear a horse to pass them, or that men cannot venture far from home through fear of being surrounded and swept away by temporary torrents, occasioned by sudden showers on the mountains ; in a word, when a man can say he is safe at home, and the spear and shield is hung up in the hall, a number of people of the best fashion in the villages, of both sexes, courtiers in the palace, or citizens in the town, meet together to dine between twelve and one o'clock.

A LONG table is set in the middle of a large room, and benches beside it for a number of guests who are invited. Tables and benches the Portuguese introduced amongst them ; but bull hides, spread upon the ground, served them before, as they do in the camp and country now. A cow or bull, one or more, as the company is numerous, is brought close to the door, and his feet strongly tied. The skin that hangs down under his chin and throat, which I think we call

call the dew-lap in England, is cut only so deep as to arrive at the fat, of which it totally consists, and, by the separation of a few small blood-vessels, six or seven drops of blood only fall upon the ground. They have no stone, bench, nor altar upon which these cruel assassins lay the animal's head in this operation. I should beg his pardon indeed for calling him an assassin, as he is not so merciful as to aim at the life, but, on the contrary, to keep the beast alive till he be totally eat up. Having satisfied the Mosaical law, according to his conception, by pouring these six or seven drops upon the ground, two or more of them fall to work; on the back of the beast, and on each side of the spine they cut skin-deep; then putting their fingers between the flesh and the skin, they begin to strip the hide of the animal half way down his ribs, and so on to the buttock, cutting the skin wherever it hinders them commodiously to strip the poor animal bare. All the flesh on the buttocks is cut off then, and in solid, square pieces, without bones, or much effusion of blood; and the prodigious noise the animal makes is a signal for the company to sit down to table.

THERE are then laid before every guest, instead of plates, round cakes, if I may so call them, about twice as big as a pan-cake, and something thicker and tougher. It is unleavened bread of a sourish taste, far from being disagreeable, and very easily digested, made of a grain called teff. It is of different colours, from black to the colour of the whitest wheat-bread. Three or four of these cakes are generally put uppermost, for the food of the person opposite to whose seat they are placed. Beneath these are four or five of ordinary bread, and of a blackish kind. These serve the master to  
wipe

wipe his fingers upon ; and afterwards the servant, for bread to his dinner.

Two or three servants then come, each with a square piece of beef in their bare hands, laying it upon the cakes of teff, placed like dishes down the table, without cloth or any thing else beneath them. By this time all the guests have knives in their hands, and their men have the large crooked ones, which they put to all sorts of uses during the time of war. The women have small clasped knives, such as the worst of the kind made at Birmingham, fold for a penny each.

THE company are so ranged that one man sits between two women ; the man with his long knife cuts a thin piece, which would be thought a good beef-steak in England, while you see the motion of the fibres yet perfectly distinct, and alive in the flesh. No man in Abyssinia, of any fashion whatever, feeds himself, or touches his own meat. The women take the steak and cut it length-ways like strings, about the thickness of your little finger, then crossways into square pieces, something smaller than dice. This they lay upon a piece of the teff bread, strongly powdered with black pepper, or Cayenne pepper, and fossil-salt, they then wrap it up in the teff bread like a cartridge.

IN the mean time, the man having put up his knife, with each hand resting upon his neighbour's knee, his body stooping, his head low and forward, and mouth open very like an idiot, turns to the one whose cartridge is first ready, who stuffs the whole of it into his mouth, which is so full that he is in constant danger of being choked. This is a



mark of grandeur. The greater the man would seem to be, the larger piece he takes in his mouth ; and the more noise he makes in chewing it, the more polite he is thought to be. They have, indeed, a proverb that says, " Beggars " and thieves only eat small pieces, or without making a " noise." Having dispatched this morsel, which he does very expeditiously, his next female neighbour holds forth another cartridge, which goes the same way, and so on till he is satisfied. He never drinks till he has finished eating ; and, before he begins, in gratitude to the fair ones that fed him, he makes up two small rolls of the same kind and form ; each of his neighbours open their mouths at the same time, while with each hand he puts their portion into their mouths. He then falls to drinking out of a large handsome horn ; the ladies eat till they are satisfied, and then all drink together, " Vive la Joye et la Jeunesse !" A great deal of mirth and joke goes round, very seldom with any mixture of acrimony or ill-humour.

ALL this time, the unfortunate victim at the door is bleeding indeed, but bleeding little. As long as they can cut off the flesh from his bones, they do not meddle with the thighs, or the parts where the great arteries are. At last they fall upon the thighs likewise ; and soon after the animal, bleeding to death, becomes so tough that the canibals, who have the rest of it to eat, find very hard work to separate the flesh from the bones with their teeth like dogs.

IN the mean time, those within are very much elevated ; love lights all its fires, and every thing is permitted with absolute freedom. There is no coyness, no delays, no need of appointments or retirement to gratify their wishes ;  
there

there are no rooms but one, in which they sacrifice both to Bacchus and to Venus\*. The two men nearest the vacuum a pair have made on the bench by leaving their seats, hold their upper garment like a screen before the two that have left the bench; and, if we may judge by sound, they seem to think it as great a shame to make love in silence as to eat.—Replaced in their seats again, the company drink the happy couple's health; and their example is followed at different ends of the table, as each couple is disposed. All this passes without remark or scandal, not a licentious word is uttered, nor the most distant joke upon the transaction.

THESE ladies are, for the most part, women of family and character, and they and their gallants are reciprocally distinguished by the name *Woodage*, which answers to what in Italy they call *Cicisbey*; and, indeed, I believe that the name itself, as well as the practice, is Hebrew; *schus chis beim*, signifies *attendants* or *companions of the bride*, or *bride's man*, as we call it in England. The only difference is, that in Europe the intimacy and attendance continues during the marriage, while, among the Jews, it was permitted only the few days of the marriage ceremony. The aversion to Judaism, in the ladies of Europe, has probably led them to the *prolongation* of the term.

It was a custom of the ancient Egyptians to purge themselves monthly for three days; and the same is still in practice in Abyssinia. We shall speak more of the reason of this

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\* In this particular they resemble the Cynics of old, of whom it was said, "Omnia quæ ad Bacchum et Venerem pertinuerint in publico facere." Diogenes Laertius in Vit. Diogen.

practice in the botanical part of our work, where a drawing of a most beautiful tree \*, used for this purpose, is given.

ALTHOUGH we read from the Jesuits a great deal about marriage and polygamy, yet there is nothing which may be averred more truly than that there is no such thing as marriage in Abyssinia, unless that which is contracted by mutual consent, without other form, subsisting only till dissolved by dissent of one or other, and to be renewed or repeated as often as it is agreeable to both parties, who, when they please, cohabit together again as man and wife, after having been divorced, had children by others, or whether they have been married, or had children with others or not. I remember to have once been at Kòscam in presence of the Iteghè, when, in the circle, there was a woman of great quality, and seven men who had all been her husbands, non of whom was the happy spouse at that time.

UPON separation they divide the children. The eldest son falls to the mother's first choice, and the eldest daughter to the father. If there is but one daughter, and all the rest sons, she is assigned to the father. If there is but one son, and all the rest daughters, he is the right of the mother. If the numbers are unequal after the first election, the rest are divided by lot. There is no such distinction as legitimate and illegitimate children from the king to the beggar; for supposing any one of their marriages valid, all the issue of the rest must be adulterous bastards.

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ONE day Ras Michael asked me, before Abba Salama, (the Acab Saat) Whether such things as these promiscuous marriages and divorces were permitted and practised in my country? I excused myself till I was no longer able; and, upon his insisting, I was obliged to answer, That even if scripture had not forbid to us as Christians, as Englishmen the law restrained us from such practices, by declaring polygamy felony, or punishable by death.

THE king in his marriage uses no other ceremony than this:—He sends an Azage to the house where the lady lives, where the officer announces to her, It is the king's pleasure that she should remove instantly to the palace. She then dresses herself in the best manner, and immediately obeys. Thenceforward he assigns her an apartment in the palace, and gives her a house elsewhere in any part she chuses. When when he makes her Iteghé, it seems to be the nearest resemblance to marriage; for, whether in the court or the camp, he orders one of the judges to pronounce in his presence, That he, the king, has chosen his hand-maid, naming her for his queen; upon which the crown is put upon her head, but she is not anointed.

THE crown being hereditary in one family, but elective in the person, and polygamy being permitted, must have multiplied these heirs very much, and produced constant disputes, so that it was found necessary to provide a remedy for the anarchy and effusion of royal blood, which was otherwise inevitably to follow. The remedy was a humane and gentle one, they were confined in a good climate upon a high mountain, and maintained there at the public expence. They are there taught to read and write, but no-

thing else ; 750 cloths for wrapping round them, 3000 ounces of gold, which is 30,000 dollars, or crowns, are allowed by the state for their maintenance. These princes are hardly used, and, in troublesome times, often put to death upon the smallest misinformation. While I was in Abyssinia their revenue was so grossly misapplied, that some of them were said to have died with hunger and of cold by the avarice and hard-heartedness of Michael neglecting to furnish them necessaries. Nor had the king, as far as ever I could discern, that fellow-feeling one would have expected from a prince rescued from that very situation himself ; perhaps this was owing to his fear of Ras Michael.

HOWEVER that be, and however distressing the situation of those princes, we cannot but be satisfied with it when we look to the neighbouring kingdom of Sennaar, or Nubia. There no mountain is trusted with the confinement of their princes, but, as soon as the father dies, the throats of all the collaterals, and all their descendents that can be laid hold of, are cut ; and this is the case with all the black states in the desert west of Sennaar, Dar Fowr, Selé, and Bagirma.

GREAT exaggerations have been used in speaking of the military force of this kingdom. The largest army that ever was in the field (as far as I could be informed from the oldest officers) was that in the rebellion before the battle of Serbraxos. I believe, when they first encamped upon the lake Tzana, the rebel army altogether might amount to about 50,000 men. In about a fortnight afterwards, many had deserted ; and I do not think (I only speak by hearsay) that, when the king marched out of Gondar, they were then above 30,000. I believe when Gojam joined, and it was known

known that Michael and his army were to be made prisoners, that the rebel army increased to above 60,000 men; cowards and brave, old and young, veteran soldiers and blackguards, all came to be spectators of that desirable event, which many of the wisest had despaired of living to see. I believe the king's army never amounted to 26,000 men; and, by desertion and other causes, when we retreated to Gondar, I do not suppose the army was 16,000, mostly from the province of Tigré. Fasil, indeed, had not joined; and putting his army of 12,000 men, (I make no account of the wild Galla beyond the Nile) I do not imagine that any king of Abyssinia ever commanded 40,000 effective men at any time, or upon any cause whatever, exclusive of his household troops.

THEIR standards are large staves, surmounted at the top with a hollow ball; below this is a tube in which the staff is fixed; and immediately below the ball, a narrow stripe of silk made forked, or swallow-tailed, like a vane, and seldom much broader. In the war of Begemder we first saw colours like a flag hoisted for king Theodorus. They were red, about eight feet long and near three feet broad; but they never appeared but two days; and the success that attended their first appearance was such that did not bid fair to bring them into fashion.

THE standards of the infantry have their flags painted two colours crossways—yellow, white, red, or green. The horse have all a lion upon their flag\*, some a red, some a green,

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The first invention is attributed to the Portuguese.

green, and some a white lion. The black horse have a yellow lion, and over it a white star upon a red flag, alluding to two prophecies, the one, "Judah is a young lion," and the other, "There shall come a star out of Judah." This had been discontinued for want of cloth till the war of Begemder, when a large piece was found in Joas's wardrobe, and was thought a certain omen of his victory, and of a long and vigorous reign. This piece of cloth was said to have been brought from Cairo by Yafous II. for the campaign of Sennaar, and, with the other standards and colours, was surrendered to the rebels when the king was made prisoner.

THE king's household troops should consist of about 8000 infantry, 2000 of which carry firelocks, and supply the place of archers; bows have been laid aside for near a hundred years, and are only now used by the Waito Shangalla, and some other barbarous inconsiderable nations.

THESE troops are divided into four companies, each under an officer called Shalaka, which answers to our colonel. Every twenty men have an officer, every fifty a second, and every hundred a third; that is, every twenty have one officer who commands them, but is commanded likewise by an officer who commands the fifty; so that there are three officers who command fifty men, six command a hundred, and thirty command five hundred, over whom is the Shalaka; and this body they call Bet, which signifies a *boufe*, or *apartment*, because each of them goes by the name of one of the king's apartments. For example, there is an apartment called Anbafâ Bet, or the *lion's boufe*, and a regiment carrying that name has the charge of it, and their duty is at that apart-

ment, or that part of the palace where it is ; there is another called Jan Bet, or the *elephant's house*, that gives the name to another regiment ; another called Werk Sacala, or the *gold house*, which gives its name to another corps ; and so on with the rest ; as for the horse, I have spoken of them already.

THERE are four regiments, that seldom, if ever, amounted to 1600 men, which depend alone upon the king, and are all foreigners, at least the officers ; these have the charge of his person while in the field. In times when the king is out of leading-strings, they amount to four or five thousand, and then oppress the country, for they have great privileges. At times when the king's hands are weak, they are kept incomplete out of fear and jealousy, which was the case in my time ;—these have been already sufficiently described.

THREE proclamations are made before the king marches. The first is, "Buy your mules, get ready your provision, and pay your servants, for, after such a day, they that seek me here shall not find me." The second is about a week after, or according as the exigency is pressing ; this is, "Cut down the kantuffa in the four quarters of the world, for I do not know where I am going." This kantuffa is a terrible thorn which very much molests the king and nobility in their march, by taking hold of their long hair, and the cotton cloth they are wrapped in. The third and last proclamation is, "I am encamped upon the Angrab, or Kahha ; "he that does not join me there, I will chastise him for seven years." I was long in doubt what this term of seven years meant, till I recollected the jubilee-year of the Jews, with



with whom seven years was a prescription of offences, debts, and all tresspasses.

THE rains generally cease the eighth of September; a sickly season follows till they begin again about the 20th of October; they then continue pretty constant, but moderate in quantity, till Hedar St Michael, the eighth of November. All epidemic diseases cease with the end of these rains, and it is then the armies begin to march.



CHAP.



## CHAP. XII.

*State of Religion—Circumcision, Excision, &c.*

**T**HERE is no country in the world where there are so many churches as in Abyssinia. Though the country is very mountainous, and consequently the view much obstructed, it is very seldom you see less than five or six churches, and, if you are on a commanding ground, five times that number. Every great man that dies thinks he has atoned for all his wickedness if he leaves a fund to build a church, or has built one in his lifetime. The king builds many. Wherever a victory is gained, there a church is erected in the very field stinking with the putrid bodies of the slain. Formerly this was only the case when the enemy was Pagan or Infidel; now the same is observed when the victories are over Christians.

THE situation of a church is always chosen near running water, for the convenience of their purifications and ablutions, in which they observe strictly the Levitical law. They are always placed upon the top of some beautiful, round

hill, which is surrounded entirely with rows of the oxy-cedrus, or Virginia cedar, which grows here in great beauty and perfection, and is called Arz\*. There is nothing adds so much to the beauty of the country as these churches and the plantations about them.

IN the middle of this plantation of cedars is interspersed, at proper distances, a number of those beautiful trees called Cusso, which grow very high, and are all extremely picturesque.

ALL the churches are round, with thatched roofs ; their summits are perfect cones ; the outside is surrounded by a number of wooden pillars, which are nothing else than the trunks of the cedar-tree, and are placed to support the edifice, about eight feet of the roof projecting beyond the wall of the church, which forms an agreeable walk, or colonade, around it in hot weather, or in rain. The inside of the church is in several divisions, according as is prescribed by the law of Moses. The first is a circle somewhat wider than the inner one ; here the congregation sit and pray. Within this is a square, and that square is divided by a veil or curtain, in which is another very small division answering to the holy of holies. This is so narrow that none but the priests can go into it. You are bare-footed whenever you enter the church, and, if bare-footed, you may go through every part of

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\* Ludolf, in his dictionary, says, this word, in Hebrew, signifies any tall tree. In this, however, he is mistaken. The translators did not, indeed, know what tree it was, and so have said this to cover their ignorance ; but Arz is as exclusively the oxy-cedrus, as is an oak or an elm when so named. Arz is indeed a tall tree, but every tall tree is not Arz, which is the Virginia berry-bearing cedar.

of it, if you have any such curiosity, provided you are pure, *i. e.* have not been concerned with women for twenty-four hours before, or touched carrion or dead bodies, (a curious assemblage of ideas) for in that case you are not to go within the precincts, or outer circumference of the church, but stand and say your prayers at an awful distance among the cedars.

ALL persons of both sexes, under Jewish disqualifications, are obliged to observe this distance; and this is always a place belonging to the church, where, unless in Lent, you see the greatest part of the congregation; but this is left to your own conscience, and, if there was either great inconvenience in the one situation, or great satisfaction in the other, the case would be otherwise.

WHEN you go to the church you put off your shoes before your first entering the outer precinct; but you must leave a servant there with them, or else they will be stolen, if good for any thing, by the priests and monks before you come out of the church. At entry you kiss the threshold, and two door-posts, go in and say what prayer you please, that finished, you come out again, and your duty is over. The churches are full of pictures, painted on parchment, and nailed upon the walls, in a manner little less slovenly than you see paltry prints in beggarly country ale-houses. There has been always a sort of painting known among the scribes, a daubing much inferior to the worst of our sign-painters. Sometimes, for a particular church, they get a number of pictures of saints, on skins of parchment, ready finished from Cairo, in a stile very little superior to these performances of their own. They are placed like a frieze, and hung in the upper part of the wall

wall. St George is generally there with his dragon, and St Demetrius fighting a lion. There is no choice in their fairs, they are both of the Old and New Testament, and those that might be dispensed with from both. There is St Pontius Pilate and his wife; there is St Balaam and his ass; Samson and his jaw-bone; and so of the rest. But the thing that surpris'd me most was a kind of square-miniature upon the front of the head-piece, or mitre, of the priest, administering the sacrament at Adowa, representing Pharaoh on a white horse plunging in the Red Sea, with many guns and pistols swimming upon the surface of it around him.

Nothing embossed, nor in relief, ever appears in any of their churches; all this would be reckoned idolatry, so much so that they do not wear a cross, as has been represented, on the top of the ball of the sendick, or standard, because it casts a shade; but there is no doubt that pictures have been used in their churches from the very earliest age of Christianity.

THE Abuna is looked upon as the patriarch of the Abyssinian church, for they have little knowledge of the coptic patriarch of Alexandria. We are perfectly ignorant of the history of these prelates for many years after their appointment. The first of these mentioned is Abuna Tecla Haimanout, who distinguished himself by the restoration of the royal family, and the regulations he made both in church and state, as we have seen in the history of those times: a very remarkable, but wise regulation was then made, that the Abyssinians should not have it in their power to choose one of their own countrymen as Abuna.

Wise men saw the fallen state of literature among them; and unless opportunity was given, from time to time, for their priests to go abroad to Jerusalem for their instruction, and for the purpose of bringing the Abuna, Tecla Haimanout knew that very soon no set of people would be more shamefully ignorant than those priests, even in the most common dogmas of their profession. He hoped therefore, by a considerable stipend, to tempt some men of learning to accept of this place, to give his countenance to learning and religion among them.

THE Arabic canon\*, which is preserved by the Abyssinian church, and said to be of the council of Nice, should certainly be attributed to this Abuna, and is a forgery in, or very soon after, his time; for it is plain this canon took place about the year 1300, that it was lawful to elect an Abuna, who was a native of Abyssinia before this prohibition, otherwise it would not have applied. Abuna Tecla Haimanout was an Abyssinian by birth, and he was Abuna; the prohibition therefore had not then taken place: but, as no Abyssinian was afterwards chosen, it must certainly be a work of his time, for it is impossible a canon should be made by the council of Nice, settling the rank of a bishop in a nation which, for above 200 years after that general council, were not Christians.

As the Abuna very seldom understands the language, he has no share of the government, but goes to the palace on days of ceremony, or when he has any favour to ask or complaint.

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\* See Ludolf, lib. iii. cap. 2. N°. 17.

plaint to make. He is much fallen in esteem from what he was formerly, chiefly from his own little intrigues, his ignorance, avarice, and want of firmness. His greatest employment is in ordinations. A number of men and children present themselves at a distance, and there stand, from humility, not daring to approach him. He then asks who these are? and they tell him that they want to be deacons. On this, with a small iron cross in his hand, after making two or three signs, he blows with his mouth twice or thrice upon them, saying, "Let them be deacons." I saw once all the army of Begemder made deacons, just returned from shedding the blood of 10,000 men, thus drawn up in Aylo Meidan, and the Abuna standing at the church of St Raphael, about a quarter of a mile distant from them. With these were mingled about 1000 women, who consequently, having part of the same blast and brandishment of the cross, were as good deacons as the rest.

THE same with regard to monks. A crowd of people, when he is riding, will assemble within 500 yards of him, and there begin a melancholy song. He asks who these men with beards are? they tell him they want to be ordained monks. After the same signs of the cross, and three blasts with his mouth, he orders them to be monks. But in ordaining priests, they must be able to read a chapter of St Mark, which they do in a language he does not understand a word of. They then give the Abuna a brick of salt, to the value of perhaps sixpence, for their ordination; which, from this present given, the Jesuits maintained to be Simoniacal.

THE Itcheguè is the chief of the monks in general, especially those of Debra Libanos. The head of the other monks, called those of St Eustathius, is the superior of the convent of Mahebar Selaflé, on the N. W. corner of Abyssinia, near Kuara, and the Shangalla, towards Sennaar and the river Dender. All this tribe is grossly ignorant, and through time, I believe, will lose the use of letters entirely.

THE Itcheguè is ordained by two chief priests holding a white cloth, or veil, over him, while another says a prayer; and they then lay all their hands on his head, and join in psalms together. He is a man, in troublesome times, of much greater consequence than the Abuna. There are, after these, chief priests and scribes, as in the Jewish church: the last of these, the ignorant, careless copiers of the holy scriptures.

THE monks here do not live in convents, as in Europe, but in separate houses round their church, and each cultivates a part of the property they have in land. The priests have their maintenance assigned to them in kind, and do not labour. A steward, being a layman, is placed among them by the king, who receives all the rents belonging to the churches, and gives to the priests the portion that is their due; but neither the Abuna, nor any other churchman, has any business with the revenues of churches, nor can touch them.

THE articles of the faith of the Abyssinians have been inquired into and discussed with so much keenness in the beginning of this century, that I fear I should disoblige



some of my readers were I to pass this subject without notice.

THEIR first bishop, Frumentius, being ordained about the year 333, and instructed in the religion of the Greeks of the church of Alexandria by St Athanasius, then sitting in the chair of St Mark, it follows that the true religion of the Abyssinians, which they received on their conversion to Christianity, is that of the Greek church; and every rite or ceremony in the Abyssinian church may be found and traced up to its origin in the Greek church while both of them were orthodox.

FRUMENTIUS preserved Abyssinia untainted with heresy till the day of his death. We find, from a letter preserved in the works of St Athanasius, that Constantius, the heretical Greek emperor, wished St Athanasius to deliver him up, which that patriarch refused to do: indeed at that time it was not in his power.

SOON after this, Arianism, and a number of other heresies, each in their turn, were brought by the monks from Egypt, and infected the church of Abyssinia. A great part of these heresies, in the beginning, were certainly owing to the difference of the languages in those times, and especially the two words Nature and Person, than which no two words were ever more equivocal in every language in which they have been translated. Either of these words, in our own language, is a sufficient example of what I have said; and in fact we have adopted them from the Latin. If we had adopted the signification of these words in religion from the Greek, and applied the Latin words of Person and Na-

ture to common and material cases, perhaps we had done better. Neither of them hath ever yet been translated into the Abyssinian, so as to be understood to mean the same thing in different places. This for a time was, in a certain degree, remedied, or understood, by the free access they had, for several ages, both to Cairo and Jerufalem, where their books were revised and corrected, and many of the principal orthodox opinions inculcated. But, since the conquest of Arabia and Egypt by Sultan Selim, in 1516, the communication between Abyssinia and these two countries hath been very precarious and dangerous, if not entirely cut off; and now as to doctrine, I am perfectly convinced they are in every respect to the full as great heretics as ever the Jesuits represented them. And I am confident, if any Catholic missionaries attempt to instruct them again, they will soon lose the use of letters, and the little knowledge they yet have of religion, from prejudice only, and fear of incurring a danger they are not sufficiently acquainted with to follow the means of avoiding it.

THE two natures in Christ, the two persons, their unity, their equality, the inferiority of the manhood, doctrines, and definitions of the time of St Athanasius, are all wrapt up in tenfold darkness, and inextricable from amidst the thick clouds of heresy and ignorance of language. Nature is often mistaken for person, and person for nature; the same of the human substance. It is monstrous to hear their reasoning upon it. One would think, that every different monk, every time he talks, purposely broached some new heresy. Scarce one of them that ever I conversed with, and those of the very best of them, would suffer it to be said, that Christ's body was perfectly like our's. Nay, it was easily seen that,

in their hearts, they went still further, and were very loth to believe, if they did believe it at all, that the body of the Virgin Mary and St Anne were perfectly human.

NOT to trouble the reader further with these uninteresting particulars and distinctions, I shall only add, that the Jesuits, in the account they give of the heresies, ignorance, and obstinacy of the Abyssinian clergy, have not misrepresented them, in the imputations made against them, either in point of faith or of morals. Whether, this being the case, the mission they undertook of themselves into that country, gave them authority to destroy the many with a view to convert the few, is a question to be resolved hereafter ; I believe it did not ; and that the tares and the wheat should have been suffered to grow together till a hand of more authority, guided by unerring judgment, pulled them, with that portion of safety he had pre-ordained for both.

THE Protestant writers again unfairly triumph over their adversaries the Catholics, by asking, Why all that noise about the two natures in Christ ? It is plain, say they, from passages in the Haimanout Abou, and their other tracts upon orthodox belief, that they acknowledge that Christ was perfect God and perfect man, of a rational soul and human flesh subsisting, and that all the confessions of unity, co-equality, and inferiority, are there expressed in the clearest manner as received in the Greek church. What necessity was there for more ; and what need of disputing upon these points already so fully settled ?

THIS, I beg leave to say, is unfair ; for though it is true that, at the time of collecting the Haimanout Abou, and at  
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the time St Athanasius, St Cyril, and St Chrysostom wrote, the explanation of these points was uniform in favour of orthodoxy, and that while access could easily be had to Jerusalem or Alexandria, then Greek and Christian cities, difficulties, if any arose, were easily resolved; yet, at the time the Jesuits came, those books were very rare in the country, and the contents of them so far from being understood, that they were applied to the support of the grossest heresies, from the misinterpretation of the ignorant monks of these latter times. That the Abyssinians *had been* orthodox availed nothing: they *were then* become as ignorant of the doctrines of St Athanasius and St Cyril, as if those fathers had never wrote; and it is their religion at this period which the Jesuits condemn, not that of the church of Alexandria, when in its purity under the first patriarchs; and, to complete all their misfortunes, no access to Jerusalem is any longer open to them, and very rarely communication with Cairo.

On the other hand, the Jesuits, who found that the Abyssinians were often wrong in some things, were resolved to deny that they could be right in any thing; and, from attacking their tenets, they fell upon their ceremonies received in the Greek church at the same time with Christianity; and in this dispute they shewed great ignorance and malevolence, which they supported by the help of falsehood and invention. I shall take notice of only one instance in many, because it has been insisted upon by both parties with unusual vehemence, and very little candour.

It was settled by the first general council, that one baptism only was necessary for the regeneration of man, for freeing him from the sin of our first parents, and listing

him under the banner of Christ,—“ I confess one baptism for the remission of sins,” says the Symbol. Now it was maintained by the Jesuits, that in Abyssinia, once every year, they baptised all grown people, or adults. I shall, as briefly as possible, set down what I myself saw while on the spot.

THE small river, running between the town of Adowa and the church, had been dammed up for several days; the stream was scanty, so that it scarcely overflowed. It was in places three feet deep, in some, perhaps, four, or little more. Three large tents were pitched the morning before the feast of the Epiphany; one on the north for the priests to repose in during intervals of the service, and beside this one to communicate in: on the south there was a third tent for the monks and priests of another church to rest themselves in their turn. About twelve o'clock at night the monks and priests met together, and began their prayers and psalms at the water-side, one party relieving each other. At dawn of day the governor, Welleta Michael, came thither with some soldiers to raise men for Ras Michael, then on his march against Waragna Fasil, and sat down on a small hill by the water-side, the troops all skirmishing on foot and on horseback around them.

As soon as the sun began to appear, three large crosses of wood were carried by three priests dressed in their sacerdotal vestments, and who, coming to the side of the river, dipt the cross into the water, and all this time the firing, skirmishing, and praying went on together. The priests with the crosses returned, one of their number before them carrying something less than an English quart of water in a silver cup or chalice; when they were about  
fifty

fifty yards from Welleta Michael, that general stood up, and the priest took as much water as he could hold in his hands and sprinkled it upon his head, holding the cup at the same time to Welleta Michael's mouth to taste; after which the priest received it back again, saying, at the same time, "Gzier y'barak," which is simply, "May God bless you." Each of the three crosses were then brought forward to Welleta Michael, and he kissed them. The ceremony of sprinkling the water was then repeated to all the great men in the tent, all cleanly dressed as in gala. Some of them, not contented with aspersion, received the water in the palms of their hands joined, and drank it there; more water was brought for those that had not partaken of the first; and, after the whole of the governor's company was sprinkled, the crosses returned to the river, their bearers singing *hallelujahs*, and the skirmishing and firing continuing.

JANNI, my Greek friend, had recommended me to the priest of Adowa; and, as the governor had placed me by him, I had an opportunity, for both these reasons, of being served among the first. My friend the priest sprinkled water upon my head, and gave me his blessing in the same words he had used to the others; but, as I saw it was not necessary to drink, I declined putting the cup to my lips, for two reasons; one, because I knew the Abyssinians have a scruple to eat or drink after strangers; the other, because I apprehended the water was not perfectly clean; for no sooner had the crosses first touched the pool, and the cup filled from the clean part for the governor, than two or three hundred boys, calling themselves *deacons*, plunged in with only a white cloth, or rag, tied round their middle; in all other respects they were perfectly naked. All their friends and relations

relations (indeed everybody) went close down to the edge of the pool, where water was thrown upon them, and first decently enough by boys of the town, and those brought on purpose as deacons; but, after the better sort of people had received the asperision, the whole was turned into a riot, the boys, muddying the water, threw it round them upon every one they saw well-dressed or clean. The governor retreated first, then the monks, and then the crosses, and left the brook in possession of the boys and blackguards, who rioted there till two o'clock in the afternoon.

I MUST, however, observe, that, a very little time after the governor had been sprinkled, two horses and two mules, belonging to Ras Michael and Ozoro Efther, came and were washed. Afterwards the soldiers went in and bathed their horses and guns; those who had wounds bathed them also. I saw no women in the bath uncovered, even to the knee; nor did I see any person of the rank of decent servants go into the water at all except with the horses. Heaps of platters and pots, that had been used by Mahometans or Jews, were brought thither likewise to be purified; and thus the whole ended.

I saw this ceremony performed afterwards at Kahha, near Gondar, in presence of the king, who drank some of the water, and was sprinkled by the priests; then took the cup in his hand, and threw the rest that was left upon Amha Yafous\*, saying, "I will be your deacon;" and this was thought a high compliment, the priest giving him his blessing at the same time, but offering him no more water.

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\* Prince of Shoa, often spoken of in the sequel.

I SHALL now state, in his own words, the account given of this by Alvarez, chaplain to the Portuguese embassy, under Don Roderigo de Lima.

THE king had invited Don Roderigo de Lima, the Portuguese ambassador, to be present at the celebration of the festival of the Epiphany. They went about a mile and a half from their former station, and encamped upon the side of a pond which had been prepared for the occasion. Alvarez says, that, in their way, they were often asked by those they met or overtook, "Whether or not they were going to be baptized?" to which the chaplain and his company answered in the negative, as having been already once baptized in their childhood.

"IN the night, says he, a great number of priests assembled about the pond, roaring and singing with a view of blessing the water. After midnight the baptism began. The Abuna Mark, the king and queen, were the first that went into the lake; they had each a piece of cotton cloth about their middle, which was just so much more than the rest of the people had. At the sun-rising the baptism was most thronged; after which, when Alvarez\* came, the lake was full of holy water, into which they had poured oil."

It should seem, from this outset of his narrative, that he was not at the lake till the ceremony was half over, and did not see the benediction of the water at all, nor the curious

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\* Vide Alvarez's narrative in his account of the embassy of Don Roderigo de Lima, page 155.



exhibition of the King, Queen, and Abuna, and their cotton cloths. As for the circumstance of the oil being poured into the water, I will not positively contradict it, for, though I was early there, it might have escaped me if it was done in the dark. However, I never heard it mentioned as part of the ceremony; and it is probable I should, if any such thing was really practised; neither was I in time to have seen it at Kahha.

“ BEFORE the pond a scaffold was built, covered round  
 “ with planks, within which sat the king looking towards  
 “ the pond, his face covered with blue taffeta, while an old  
 “ man, who was the king’s tutor, was standing in the water  
 “ up to the shoulders, naked as he was born, and half dead  
 “ with cold, for it had *frozen* violently in the night. All  
 “ those that came near him he took by the head and plun-  
 “ ged them in the water, whether men or women, saying, in  
 “ his own language, I baptize thee in the name of the Father,  
 “ Son, and Holy Ghost.”

Now Shoa, where the king was then, is in lat. 8° N. and the sun was in 22° south declination, advancing northward, so the sun was, on the day of the Epiphany, within 30° of the zenith of the bathing-place. The thermometer of Fahrenheit rises at Gondar about that time to 68°, so in Shoa it cannot rise to less than 70°, for Gondar is in lat. 12° N. that is 4° farther northward, so it is not possible water should freeze, nor did I ever see ice in Abyssinia, not even on the highest or coldest mountains. January is one of the hottest months in the year, day and night the sky is perfectly serene, nor is there there a long disproportioned winter night. At Shoa the

days are equal to the nights, at least as to sense, even in the month of January.

THE baptism, Alvarez says, began at midnight, and the old tutor dipped every person under water, taking him by the head, saying, 'I baptise thee in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' It was most thronged at sunrise, and ended about nine o'clock; a long time for an old man to stand in frozen water.

THE number (as women were promiscuously admitted) could not be less than 40,000; so that even the nine hours this baptism-general officiated, he must have had exercise enough to keep him warm, if 40,000, (many of them naked beauties) passed through *his hands*.

THE women were stark naked before the men, not even a rag about them. Without some such proper medium as frozen water, I fear it would not have contributed much to the interests of religion to have trusted a priest (even an old one) among so many bold and naked beauties, especially as he had the first six hours of them in the dark.

THE Abuna, the king, and queen, were the three first baptised, all three being absolutely naked, having only a cotton cloth round their middle. I am sure there never could be a greater deviation from the manners of any kingdom, than this is from those of Abyssinia. The king is always covered; you seldom see any part of him but his eyes. The queen and every woman in Abyssinia, in public and private, (I mean where nothing is intended but conversation) are covered to the chin. It is a disgrace to them to have even

their feet seen by strangers ; and their arms and hands are concealed even to their nails. A curious circumstance therefore it would have been for the king to be so liberal of his queen's charms, while he covers his own face with blue taffeta ; but to imagine that the Abuna, a coptish monk bred in the desert of St Macarius, would expose himself naked among naked women, contrary to the usual custom of the celebration he observes in his own church, is monstrous, and must exceed all belief whatever. As the Abuna Mark too was of the reasonable age of 110 years, he might, I think, have dispensed at that time of life with a bathing gown, especially as it was *frost*.

THE old man in the pond repeated the formula, " I baptise you in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," in his own language; and Alvarez, it is plain, understood not one word of Abyssinian. Yet, on the other hand, he speaks Latin to the king, who wonderfully understands him, and answers as decisively on the merits of the dispute as if he had been educated in the Sorbonne. " Confiteor unum baptizma" says Alvarez \*, was a constitution of the Nicene council under Pope Leo. Right, says the king, whose church, however, anathematized Leo and the council he presided at, which both the king and Alvarez should have known was not the Nicene council, though the words of the symbol quoted are thought to be part of a confession framed by that assembly.

" Qui

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\* Vid. Alvarez, hoc loco.

“*Qui crediderit et baptizatus fuerit salvus erit,*” says Alvarez. “You say right, answers the king, as to baptism; these are the words of our Saviour; but this present ceremony was lately invented by a grandfather of mine, in favour of such as have turned Moors, and are desirous again of becoming Christians.”

I SHOULD think, in the first place, this answer of the king, should have let Alvarez see no baptism was intended there; or, if it was a re-baptism, it only took place in favour of those who had turned Moors, and must therefore have been but partial. If this was really the case, what had the king, queen, and Abuna to do in it? Sure they had neither apostatized nor was the company of apostates a very creditable society for them.

ALVAREZ, to persuade us this is real baptism, says that oil was thrown into the pond before he came. He will not charge himself with having seen this, and it is probably a falsehood. But he knew it was an essential in baptism in all the churches in the east; so indeed is salt, which he should have said was here used likewise: then he would have had all the materials of Greek baptism, and this salt might have contributed to cooling the water, that had frozen under the rays of a burning sun.

ALVAREZ must have seen, that not only men and women go to be washed in the pool, but horses, cows, mules, and a prodigious number of asses. Are these baptized? I would wish to know the formula the reverend baptist-general used on their occasion.

THERE is but one church where I ever saw sacred rites, or something like baptism, conferred upon asses ; it is, I think, at Rome on St Andrew's or St Patrick's day. It should be St Balaam's, if he was in the Roman kalendar as high as he is in the Abyssinian. In that church (it is I think on Monte Cavallo) all sorts of asses, about and within Rome, are gathered together, and showers of holy water and blessings rained by a priest upon them. What is the formula I do not know; although it is a joke put upon strangers, especially of one nation, to assemble them there ; or whether the two churches of Rome and Abyssinia differ so much in this as in other points of discipline, I am not informed ; but the rationality and decency of such a ceremony being the same in all churches, the service performed at the time should be the same likewise.

I WILL not then have any scruple to say, that this whole account of Alvarez is a gross fiction ; that no baptism, or any thing like baptism, is meant by the ceremony ; that a man is no more baptised by keeping the anniversary of our Saviour's baptism, than he is crucified by keeping his crucifixion. The commemoration of our Saviour's baptism on the epiphany, and the blessing the waters that day, is an old observance of the eastern church, formerly performed in public in Egypt as now in Ethiopia. Since that of Alexandria fell into the hands of Mahometans, the fear of insult and profanation has obliged them to confine this ceremony, and all other processions, within the walls of their churches, in each of which there is constantly a place devoted to this use. Those that cannot attend the ceremony of aspersion in the church, especially sick or infirm people, have the water sent to them, and a large contribution is made for the patriarch, or bishop ; yet

nobody ever took it into their heads to tax either Greek or Armenian with a repetition of baptism.

MONSIEUR DE TOURNEFORT\*, in his travels through the Levant, gives you a figure of the Greek priest, who blesses the water in a peculiar habit, with a pastoral staff in his hand.

BUT, besides this, various falsehoods have likewise been propagated about the manner of baptism practised in Abyssinia, all in order to impugn the validity of it, and to excuse the rash conduct of the Jesuits for re-baptising all the Abyssinians, as if they had been a Jewish and Pagan people that never had been baptised at all. The violation of this article of the creed, or confession of Nice, was a cause of great offence to the Abyssinians, and of the misfortunes that happened afterwards. The whole of the Abyssinian service of baptism is in their liturgy. The Jesuits had plenty of copies in their hands, and could have pointed out the part of the service that was heretical, if they had pleased; they did not pretend, however, to do this, and their silence condemns them.

As for the idle stories that are told of the words pronounced, such as,—“I baptize you in the name of the Holy Trinity,”—“In the name of Peter and Paul,”—“I baptize you in the water of Jordan,”—“May God baptise you,”—“May God wash you,” and many others, they are all invented by the Jesuits, to excuse the repetition of baptism in Abyssinia, which

which there was no sort of occasion for, as they might have examined the words and form in the liturgies, which are in every church; and I must here only observe, that if, as the chaplain of Alvarez says, the priest in the pool, on the festival of the Epiphany, was so fond of the proper words as even, at that time, to say, "I baptise you in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," the words he quotes to shew this immersion in water on the Epiphany, is a real baptism, I cannot comprehend why they should vary them to other words, when nothing but baptism is meant. But this I can bear evidence of, that, in no time when I was present, as I have above a hundred times been at the baptism both of adults and infants, aye, and of apostates too, I never heard other words pronounced than the orthodox baptismal ones, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," immersing the child in pure water, into which they first pour a small quantity of oil of olives, in the form of a cross.

THE Abyssinians receive the holy sacrament in both kinds in unleavened bread, and in the grape bruised with the husk together as it grows, so that it is a kind of marmalade, and is given in a flat spoon: whatever they may pretend, some mixture seems necessary to keep it from fermentation in the state that it is in, unless the dried cluster is fresh bruised just before it is used, for it is little more fluid than the common marmalade of confectioners; but it is perfectly the grape as it grew, bruised stones and skin together. Some means, however, have been used, as I suppose, to prevent fermentation, and make it keep; and, though this is constantly denied, I have often thought I tasted a flavour that was not natural to the grape itself.

It is a mistake that there is no wine in Abyssinia, for a quantity of excellent strong wine is made at Dreedra, south-west from Gondar about thirty miles, which would more than supply the quantity necessary for the celebration of the eucharist in all Abyssinia twenty times over. The people themselves are not fond of wine, and plant the vine in one place only; and in this they have been imitated by the Egyptians, their colony; but a small black grape, of an excellent flavour, grows plentifully wild in every wood in Tigré.

LARGE pieces of bread are given to the communicants in proportion to their quality; and I have seen great men, who, though they open their mouths as wide as conveniently a man can do, yet from the respect the priest bore him, such a portion of the loaf was put into his mouth that water ran from his eyes, from the incapacity of chewing it, which, however, he does as indecently, and with full as much noise, as he eats at table.

AFTER receiving the sacrament of the eucharist in both kinds, a pitcher of water is brought, of which the communicant drinks a large draught; and well he needs it to wash down the quantity of bread he has just swallowed. He then retires from the steps of the inner division upon which the administering priest stands, and, turning his face to the wall of the church, in private says some prayer with seeming decency and attention.

THE Romanists doubt of the validity of the Abyssinian consecration of the elements, because in their liturgy it is plainly said, "Lord, put thy hand upon this cup, and bless  
" it,



“ it, and sanctify it, and purify it, that in it may be made thy holy blood ;” and of the bread they say, “ Bless this saucer, or plate, that in it may be made thy holy body.” And in their prayer they say, “ Change this bread that it may be made thy pure body which is joined with this cup of thy precious blood.” The Jesuits doubt of the validity of this consecration, because it is said, “ this *bread* is my body,” and over the wine, “ this *cup* is my blood ;” whereas, to operate a true transubstantiation, they should say over the bread, “ this is my body.”

For my own part, I leave it to the reverend fathers, who are the best judges, what is necessary to operate this miracle of transubstantiation. The reality of the thing itself is denied by all Protestant churches, has been often doubted by others, has been ridiculed by lay-writers, and can never be a matter, I believe, of thorough conviction, much less of proof to any. The dignity of the subject, on which it touches nearly, as well as tenderness for our brethren on the continent, an article of whose faith it is, should always screen it from being treated with pleasantry, whatever we believe, or whether we believe it or not.

M. LUDOLF thinks, that the words I have set down are a proof the Abyssinians do not believe in transubstantiation. For my part, from those very words, I cannot think any thing is clearer than that they do ; the bread is upon the plate ; they pray that that plate may be blessed, “ That in it the bread may be made God’s holy body\* ;” and of the wine they  
say,

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\* See the Ethiopic liturgies *patina*. Ludolf, lib. iii. cap. 5.

say, "That it may be made thy holy blood:" and in their prayer they say, "Change this bread that it may be made thy body;" and again, "May the Holy Ghost shine upon this bread, that it may be made the body of Christ our God, and that this cup may be changed and become the blood, not the *symbol*, of the blood of Christ our God." With all respect to Mr Ludolf's opinion, I must think that, though the benediction prayed upon the patine, spoon, and chalice, is but an awkward expression, yet, if I understand the language, "converte" and "immutetur" are literal translations of the Ethiopic, and seem to pray for a transubstantiation as directly as words will admit, whether they believe in it or not; nor, as far as I know, can any stronger or more expressive be found to substitute in their place.

I SHALL finish this subject (which is not of my province, and which I have mentioned, because I know it is a matter which some of my readers desire information upon) by an anecdote that happened a few months before my coming into Abyssinia, as it was accidentally told me by the priest of Adowa the very day of the Epiphany, and which Janni vouched to be true, and to have seen.

THE Sunday before Ras Michael's departure for Gondar from Adowa, he went to church in great pomp, and there received the sacrament. There happened to be such a crowd to see him, that the wine, part of the consecrated elements, was thrown down and spilt upon the steps whereon the communicants stood at receiving. Some straw or hay was instantly gathered and sprinkled upon it to cover it, and the communicants continued the service till the end, treading that grass under foot.

THIS giving great offence to Janni, and some few priests, that lived with him, it was told Michael, who, without explaining himself, said only, "As to the fact of throwing the hay, they are a parcel of hogs, and know no better." These few words had stuck in the stomach of the priest of Adowa, who, with great secrecy, and as a mark of friendship, begged I would give him my opinion what he should have done, or rather, what would have been done in my country? I told him, "That the answer to his question depended upon two things, which, being known, his difficulties would very easily be solved. If you do believe that the wine spilt by the mob upon the steps, and trod under foot afterwards, was really the blood of Jesus Christ, then you was guilty of a most horrid crime, and you should cry upon the mountains to cover you; and ages of atonement are not sufficient to expiate it. You should, in the mean time, have railed the place round with iron, or built it round with stone, that no foot, or any thing else but the dew of heaven, could have fallen upon it, or you should have brought in the river upon the place that would have washed it all to the sea, and covered it ever after from sacrilegious profanation. But if, on the contrary, you believe, (as many Christian churches do) that the wine (notwithstanding consecration) remained in the cup nothing more than wine, but was only the symbol, or type, of Christ's blood of the New Testament, then the spilling it upon the steps, and the treading upon it afterwards, having been merely accidental, and out of your power to prevent, being so far from your wish that you are heartily sorry that it happened, I do not reckon that you are further liable in the crime of sacrilege, than if the wine had not been consecrated at all. You are to humble yourself, and sincerely regret that so irreverent an accident happened in your hands, and

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in your time, but as you did not intend it, and could not prevent it; the consequence of an accident, where inattention is exceedingly culpable, will be imputed to you, and nothing further."

THE priest declared to me, with great earnestness, that he never did believe that the elements in the eucharist were converted by consecration into the real body and blood of Christ. He said, however, that he believed this to be the Roman Catholic faith, but it never was his; and that he conceived the bread was bread, and the wine was wine, even after consecration. From this example, which occurred merely accidentally, and was not the fruit of interrogation or curiosity, it appears to me, whatever the Jesuits say, some at least among the Abyssinians do not believe the real presence in the eucharist; but further I am not enough informed to give a positive opinion. To follow this investigation more curiously would have been attended with a considerable degree of danger; and therefore I have stated my only means of knowledge, and leave my readers entirely to the freedom of their own opinion, and to after inquiry and information.

THE Abyssinians are not all agreed about the state of souls before the resurrection of the body. The opinion which generally prevails is, that there is no third state; but that, after the example of the thief, the souls of good men enjoy the beatific vision immediately upon the separation from the body. But I must here observe, that their practice and books do both contradict this; for, as often as any person dies, alms are given, and prayers are offered for the souls of those departed, which would be vain did they believe they were

already in the presence of God, and in possession of the greatest blessing possible, wanting nothing to complete it. "Remember, (says their liturgy) O Lord! the souls of thy servants, our father Abba Matthias, and the rest of our saints, Abba Salama, and Abba Jacob." In another place, "Remember, O Lord! the kings of Ethiopia, Abreha, and Arzbeha, Caleb, and Guebra Mascäl." And again, "Release, O Lord! our father Antonius, and Abba Macarius.' If this is not directly acknowledging a separate state, it can have no meaning at all.

I HAVE already said, that the Agaazi, the predecessors of those people that settled in Tigrè from the mountains of the Habab, were shepherds adjoining to the Red Sea; that they speak the language *Geez*, and are the only people in Abyssinia in possession of letters; that these are all circumcised, both men and women. The former term, as applied to men, is commonly known to every one the least acquainted with the Jewish history. The latter is, as far as I know, a rite merely Gentile, although in Africa, at least that part adjoining to Egypt and the Red Sea, it is much more known and more universally practised than the other. This I shall call *excision*, that I may express this uncommon operation by as decent a word as possible. The Falasha likewise submit to both.

THESE nations, however they agree in their rite, differ in their accounts of the time they received this ceremony, as well as the manner of performing it. The Abyssinians of Tigrè say, that they received it from Ishmael's family and his descendants, with whom they were early connected in their trading voyages. They say also, that the queen of Saba, and all the women of that coast, had suffered excision at the usual time of life, before puberty, and before her journey

ney to Jerusalem. The Falasha again declare, that their circumcision was that commonly practised at Jerusalem in the time of Solomon, and in use among them when they left Palestine, and came into Abyssinia.

THE circumcision of the Abyssinians is performed with a sharp knife, or razor. There is no laceration with the nails, no formula or repetition of words, nor any religious ceremony at the time of the operation, nor is it done at any particular age, and generally it is a woman that is the surgeon. The Falasha say, they perform it sometimes with the edge of a sharp stone; sometimes with a knife or razor, and at other times with the nails of their fingers; and for this purpose they have the nails of their little fingers of an immoderate length: at the time of the operation the priest chants a hymn, or verse, importing, "Blessed art thou, O Lord, who hast ordained circumcision!" This is performed on the eighth day, and is a religious rite, according to the first institution by God to Abraham.

THE Abyssinians pretend theirs is not so; and, being pressed for the reason, they tell you it is because Christ and the apostles were circumcised, though they do not hold it necessary to salvation. But it is the objection they constantly make against eating out of the same plate, or drinking out of the same cup with strangers, that they are uncircumcised, while, with the Egyptians or the Cophts, though equally strangers, they make no such difficulty. In the time of the Jesuits, when the Roman Catholic religion was abolished, and liberty given them to return to their old worship, their priests proclaimed a general circumcision; and the populace, in the first days of their fury, or triumph, murdered many Catholics, by stabbing them with a lance in that

part, as they met them, repeating in derision the Jewish hymn, or ejaculation, "Blessed is the Lord that hath ordained circumcision !" so that, I believe, their indifference in this article is rather owing to not being contradicted ; just as they are careless about every other parts of religion, unless such as have been revived in their minds by disputes with the Jesuits, and kept up since in part among their clergy. But none of them pretend that circumcision arises from necessity of any kind, or from any obstruction or impediment to procreation, or that it becomes necessary for cleanliness, or from the heat of climate.

NONE of these reasons, constantly alledged in Europe, are ever to be heard of here, nor do I believe they have the smallest foundation any where ; and this, I think, should weigh strongly in favour of the account scripture gives of it. Examining the origin of this ceremony, independent of this revelation, I will never believe that man, or nations of men, rashly submitted to a disgraceful, sometimes dangerous, and always painful operation, unless there had been proposed, as a consequence, some reward for submitting to, or some punishment for refusing it, which balanced in their minds the pain and danger, as well as disgrace, of that operation.

ALL the inhabitants of the globe agree in considering it shameful to expose that part of their body, even to men ; and in the east, where, from climate, you are allowed, and from respect to your superiors, the generality of men are forced to go naked, all agree in covering their waist, which is called their *nakedness*, though it is really the only part of their body that is covered. We see even that there was a  
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curse\* attended the mere seeing that part of the body of a parent, and not instantly throwing a covering over it.

I do not propose discussing at large the arguments for or against the time of the beginning to circumcise. The scripture has given such an account of it, that, when weighed with the promise so exactly kept to the end, seems to me to be a very rational one. But, considering all revelation out of the question, I think there is no room to institute any free or fair inquiry. I give no pre-eminence to Moses nor his writings. I suppose him a profane author; but, till those that argue against his account, and maintain circumcision was earlier than Abraham, shall shew me another profane writer as old as Moses, as near the time they say it began as Moses was to the time of Abraham, I will not argue with them in support of Moses against Herodotus, nor discuss who Herodotus's Phenicians, and who his Egyptians were that circumcised. Herodotus knew not Abraham nor Moses, and, compared to their days, he is but as yesterday. Those Phenicians and Egyptians might, for any thing he knew at his time, have received circumcision from Abraham or Ishmael, or some of their posterity, as the Abyssinians or Ethiopians, whom he refers to, actually say they did, which Herodotus did not know, it is plain, though he mentions they were circumcised. This tradition of the Abyssinians merits some consideration from what they say of it themselves, that they were, in the earliest time, circumcised before they left their native country, and settled in Tigre. From this they derive no honour, nor do they pretend

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\* Gen. chap. ix. ver. 22.



tend to any. It would have been otherwise, if the æra fixed upon had been the reign of Menilek, son of Solomon, when they first embraced Judaism under a monarch. This would have made a much more brilliant epoch in their history, whilst it was probable that they adopted circumcision under the countenance of Azarias, the son of Zadok, the high priest, and the representatives of the twelve tribes who came with him at that time from Jerusalem.

It seems to me very extraordinary, that, if circumcision was originally a Jewish invention, all those nations to the south should be absolutely ignorant of it, while others to the northward were so early acquainted with it; for none of those nations up the Nile (excepting the Shepherds) either know or practise it to this day; though, ever since the 1400th year before Christ, they have been in the closest connection with the Jews. This would rather make me believe, that the rite of circumcision went northward from the plain of Mamrè, for it certainly made no progress southward from Egypt. We see it obtained in Arabia, by Zipporah\*, Moses's wife, circumcising her son upon their return to Egypt. Her great anxiety to have that operation immediately performed, shews that her's was a Judaical circumcision; there was no sin that attended the omission of this operation in Egypt, but God had said to Abraham †, "The soul that is not circumcised shall be cut off from Israel."

THE Tcheratz Agows, who live between Lafta and Begemder, in an exceedingly fertile country, are not circumcised;

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\* Exod. chap. iv. ver. 25.

† Gen. chap. xvii. ver. 14.

cised; and, therefore, if this nation left Palestine upon Joshua passing Jordan, circumcision was not known there, for the Agows to this day are uncircumcised. The same may be said of the Agows of Damot, who are settled at the head of the Nile. It will be seen by the two specimens of their different languages that they are different nations, as I have alledged. Next to these are the Gafat, in a plain open country, who do not use circumcision; none of them were ever converted to Judaism, and but few of them to Christianity. The next are the people of Amhara who did not use circumcision, at least few of them, till after the massacre of the princes by Judith in the year 900, when the remaining princes of the line of Solomon fled to Shoa, and the court was established there. The last of these nations that I shall mention are the Galla, who are not circumcised; of this nation we have said enough.

On the north, a black, woolly-headed nation, called the Shangalla, already often mentioned, bounds Abyssinia, and serves like a string to the bow made by these nations of Galla. Who they are we know perfectly, being the Cushite Troglodytes of Sofala, Saba, Axum and Meroë; shut up, as I have already mentioned, in those caves, the first habitations of their more polished ancestors. Neither do these circumcise, though they immediately bordered upon Egypt, while the Cushite, adjoining to the peninsula of Africa certainly did. As then so many nations contiguous to Egypt never received circumcision from it, it seems an invincible argument, that this was no endemial rite or custom among the Egyptians, and I have before observed, that it was of no use to this nation, as the reasons mentioned by Philo, and the rest, of cleanliness and climate, are absolute dreams, and

now, exploded ; and that they are so is plain, because, otherwise, the nations more to the southward would have adopted it, as they have universally done another custom, which I shall presently speak of.

CIRCUMCISION, then, having no natural cause or advantage, being in itself repugnant to man's nature, and extremely painful, if not dangerous, it could never originate in man's mind wantonly and out of free-will. It might have done so indeed from imitation, but with Abraham it had a cause, as God was to make his private family in a few years numerous, like the sands of the sea. This mark, which separated them from all the world, was an easy way to shew whether the promise was fulfilled or not. They were going to take possession of a land where circumcision was not known, and this shewed them their enemy distinct from their own people. And it would be the grossest absurdity to send Samson to bring, as tokens of the slain, so many foreskins or prepuces of the Philistines, if, as Herodotus says, the Philistines had cut off their prepuces a thousand years before.

I must here take notice that this custom, filthy and barbarous as it is, has been adopted by the Abyssinians of Tigrè, who have always been circumcised, from a knowledge that the nations about them were not circumcised at all. It is true they do not content themselves with the foreskin, and I doubt very much if this was not the case with the Jews likewise. On the contrary, in place of the foreskin they cut the whole away, scrotum and all, and bring this to their superiors, as a token they have killed an enemy.

ALTHOUGH.

ALTHOUGH it then appears that the nations which had Egypt between Abraham and them, that is, were to the southward, did not follow the Egyptians in the rite of circumcision, yet in another, of excision, they all concurred. Strabo\* says, the Egyptians circumcised both men and women, *like the Jews*. I will not pretend to say that any such operation ever did obtain among the Jewish women, as scripture is silent upon it; and indeed it is nowhere ever pretended to have been a religious rite, but to be introduced from necessity, to avoid a deformity which nature has subjected particular people to, in particular climates and countries.

WE perceive among the brutes, that nature, creating the animal with the same limbs or members all the world over, does yet indulge itself in a variety, in the proportion of such limbs or members. Some are remarkable for the size of their heads, some for the breadth and bigness of the tail, some for the length of their legs, and some for the size of their horns. There is a district in Abyssinia, within the perpetual rains, where cows, of no greater size than ours, have horns, each of which would contain as much water as the ordinary water-pail used in England does; and I remember on the frontiers of Sennaar, near the river Dender, to have seen a herd of many hundred cows, every one of which had the apparent construction of their parts almost similar with that of the bull; so that, for a considerable time, I was persuaded that these were oxen, their udders being very small, until I had seen them milked.

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\* Lib. xvii. p. 950.

THIS particular appearance, or unnecessary appendage, at first made me believe that I had found the real cause of circumcision from analogy, but, upon information, this did not hold. It is however otherwise in the excision of women. From climate, or some other cause, a certain disproportion is found generally to prevail among them. And, as the population of a country has in every age been considered as an object worthy of attention, men have endeavoured to remedy this deformity by the amputation of that redundancy. All the Egyptians, therefore, the Arabians, and nations to the south of Africa, the Abyssinians, Gallas, Agows, Gafats, and Gongas, make their children undergo this operation, at no fixed time indeed, but always before they are marriageable.

WHEN the Roman Catholic priests first settled in Egypt, they did not neglect supporting their mission by temporal advantages, and small presents given to needy people their proselytes; but mistaking this excision of the Coptish women for a ceremony performed upon Judaical principles, they forbade, upon pain of excommunication, that excision should be performed upon the children of parents who had become Catholics. The converts obeyed, the children grew up, and arrived at puberty; but the consequences of having obeyed the interdict were, that the man found, by chusing a wife among Catholic Cophts, he subjected himself to a very disagreeable inconveniency, to which he had conceived an unconquerable aversion, and therefore he married a heretical wife, free from this objection, and with her he relapsed into heresy.

THE missionaries therefore finding it impossible that ever their congregation could increase, and that this accident did frustrate all their labours, laid their case before the College of Cardinals *de propaganda fide*, at Rome. These took it up as a matter of moment, which it really was, and sent over visitors skilled in surgery, fairly to report upon the case as it stood; and they, on their return, declared, that the heat of the climate, or some other natural cause, did, in that particular nation, invariably alter the formation so as to make a difference from what was ordinary in the sex in other countries, and that this difference did occasion a disgust, which must impede the consequences for which matrimony was instituted. The college, upon this report, ordered that a declaration, being first made by the patient and her parents that it was not done from Judaical intention, but because it disappointed the ends of marriage, “*Si modo matrimonii fructus impediret id omnino tollendum esset* :” that the imperfection was, by all manner of means, to be removed; so that the Catholics, as well as the Cophts, in Egypt, undergo excision ever since. This is done with a knife, or razor, by women generally when the child is about eight years old\*.

THERE is another ceremony with which I shall close, and this regards the women also, and I shall call it *incision*. This is

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\* The reader will observe, by the obscurity of this passage, that it is with reluctance I have been determined to mention it at all; but as it is an historical fact, which has had material consequences, I have thought it not allowable to omit it altogether. Any naturalist, wishing for more particular information, may consult the French copy.

is an usage frequent, and still retained among the Jews, though positively prohibited by the law : " Thou shalt not cut thy face for the sake of, or on account of the dead \*." As soon as a near relation dies in Abyssinia, a brother or parent, cousin-german or lover, every woman in that relation, with the nail of her little finger, which she leaves long on purpose, cuts the skin of both her temples, about the size of a fixpence ; and therefore you see either a wound or a scar in every fair face in Abyssinia ; and in the dry season, when the camp is out, from the loss of friends they seldom have liberty to heal till peace and the army return with the rains.

THE Abyssinians, like the ancient Egyptians, their first colony, in computing their time, have continued the use of the solar year. Diodorus Siculus says, " They do not reckon their time by the moon, but according to the sun ; that thirty days constitute their month, to which they add five days and the fourth part of a day, and this completes their year.

THESE five days were, by the Egyptians, called Nici, and, by the Greeks, Epagomeni, which signifies, days added, or superinduced, to complete a sum. The Abyssinians add five days, which they call Quagomi, a corruption from the Greek Epagomeni, to the month of August, which is their Naha-ssé. Every fourth year they add a sixth day. They begin the year, like all the eastern nations, with the 29th or 30th day of August, that is the kalends of September, the 29th of August being the first of their month Mascaram.

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\* Deut. chap. xiv. ver. 1.

It is uncertain whence they derived the names of their months ; they have no signification in any of the languages of Abyssinia. The name of the first month among the old Egyptians has continued to this day. It is Tot, probably so called from the first division of time among the Egyptians, from observation of the heliacal rising of the dog-star. The names of the months retained in Abyssinia are possibly in antiquity prior to this ; they are probably those given them by the Cushite, before the Kalendars at Thebes and Meroë, their colony, were formed.

THE common epoch which the Abyssinians make use of is from the creation of the world ; but in the quantity of this period they do not agree with the Greeks, nor with other eastern nations, who reckon 5508 years from the creation to the birth of Christ. The Abyssinians adopt the even number of 5500 years, casting away the odd eight years ; but whether this was first done for ease of calculation, or some better reason, there is neither book nor tradition that now can teach us. They have, besides this, many other epochs, such as from the council of Nice and Ephesus. There is likewise to be met with in their books a portion of time, which is certainly a cycle ; the Ethiopic word is kamar, which, literally interpreted, is an arch, or circle. It is not now in use in civil life among the Abyssinians, and therefore was mentioned as containing various quantities from 100 years to 19 ; and there are places in their history where neither of these will apply, nor any even number whatever.

THEY make use of the golden number and epact constantly in all their ecclesiastic computations : the first they call



call Matqué, the other Abacté. Scaliger, who has taken great pains upon this confused subject, the computation of time in the church of Abyssinia, without having succeeded in making it much clearer, tells us, that the first use or invention of epacts was not earlier than the time of Dioclesian; but this is contrary to the positive evidence of Abyssinian history, which says expressly, that the epact was invented by Demetrius\*, patriarch of Alexandria. "Unless, says the poet in their liturgy, Demetrius had made this revelation by the immediate influence of the Holy Ghost, how, I pray you, was it possible that the computation of time, called Epacts, could ever have been known?" And, again, "When you meet, says he, you shall learn the computation by epacts, which was taught by the Holy Ghost to father Demetrius, and by him revealed to you." Now Demetrius was the twelfth patriarch of Alexandria, who was elected about the 190th year of Christ, or in the reign of the emperor Severus, consequently long before the time of Dioclesian.

It seems the reputation the Egyptians had from very old time for their skill in computation and the division of time, remained with them late in the days of Christianity. Pope Leo the Great, writing to the emperor Marcian, confesses that the fixing the time of the moveable feasts was always an exclusive privilege of the church of Alexandria; and therefore, says he, in his letter about reforming the kalendar, the holy fathers endeavoured to take away the occasion of this error, by delegating the whole care of this to the

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\* Encom. 12th October, Od. 3. tom. 1. Ann. Alexan. p. m. 363.

the bishop of Alexandria, because the Egyptians, from old times, seem to have had this gift of computation given them; and when these had signified to the apostolic See the days upon which the moveable feasts were to happen, the church of Rome then notified this by writing to churches at a greater distance.

WE are not to doubt that this privilege, which the church of Alexandria had been so long in possession of, contributed much to inflame the minds of the Abyssinians against the Roman Catholic priests, for altering the time of keeping Easter, by appointing days of their own; for we see violent commotions to have arisen every year upon the celebration of this festival.

THE Abyssinians have another way of describing time peculiar to themselves; they read the whole of the four evangelists every year in their churches. They begin with Matthew, then proceed to Mark, Luke, and John, in order; and, when they speak of an event, they write and say it happened in the days of Matthew, that is, in the first quarter of the year, while the gospel of St Matthew was yet reading in the churches.

THEY compute the time of the day in a very arbitrary, irregular manner. The twilight, as I have before observed, is very short, almost imperceptible, and was still more so when the court was removed farther to the southward in Shoa. As soon as the sun falls below the horizon, night comes on, and all the stars appear. This term, then, the twilight, they choose for the beginning of their day, and call it Naggé, which is the very time the twilight of the

morning lasts. The same is observed at night, and *Mefet* is meant to signify the instant of beginning the twilight, between the sun's falling below the horizon and the stars appearing. Mid-day is by them called *Kater*, a very old word, which signifies *culmination*, or a thing's being arrived or placed at the middle or highest part of an arch. All the rest of times, in conversation, they describe by pointing at the place in the heavens where the sun then was, when what they are describing happened.

I SHALL conclude what further I have to say on this subject, by observing, that nothing can be more inaccurate than all Abyssinian calculations. Besides their absolute ignorance in arithmetic, their excessive idleness and aversion to study, and a number of fanciful, whimsical combinations, by which every particular scribe or monk distinguishes himself, there are obvious reasons why there should be a variation between their chronology and ours. I have already observed, that the beginning of our years are different; ours begin on the 1st of January, and theirs on the 1st day of September, so that there are 8 months difference between us. The last day of August may be the year 1780 with us, and 1779 only with the Abyssinians. And in the reign of their kings they very seldom mention either month or day beyond an even number of years. Supposing, then, it is known that the reign of ten kings extended from such to such a period, where all the months and days are comprehended, when we come to assign to each of these an equal number of years, without the correspondent months and days, it is plain that, when all these separate reigns come to be added together, the one sum-total will not agree with the other, but will be more or less than the

just time which that prince reigned. This, indeed, as errors compensate full as frequently as they accumulate, will seldom amount to a difference above three years; a space of time too trivial to be of any consequence in the history of barbarous nations.

HOWEVER, it will occur that even this agreement is no positive evidence of the exactness of the time, for it may so happen that the sum-totals may agree, and yet every particular sum constituting the whole may be false, that is, if the quantity of errors which are too much exactly correspond with the quantity of errors that are too little; to obviate this as much as possible, I have considered three eclipses of the sun as recorded in the Abyssinian annals. The first was in the reign of David III. the year before the king marched out to his first campaign against Maffudi the Moor, in the unfortunate war with Adel. The year that the king marched into Dawaro was the 1526, after having dispatched the Portuguese ambassador Don Roderigo de Lima, who embarked at Masuah on the 26th of April on board the fleet commanded by Don Hector de Silveyra, who had come from India on purpose to fetch him; and the Abyssinian annals say, that, the year before the king marched, a remarkable eclipse of the sun had happened in the Ethiopic month Ter. Now, in consulting our European accounts, we find that, on the second of January, answering to the 18th day of Ter, there did happen an eclipse of the sun, which, as it was in the time of the year when the sky is cloudless both night and day, must have been visible all the time of its duration. So here our accounts do agree precisely.

THE second happened on the 13th year of the reign of Claudius, as the Abyssinian account states it. Claudius succeeded to the crown in the 1540, and the 13th year of his reign will fall to be on the 1553. Now we find this eclipse did happen in the same clear season of the year, that is, on the 24th of January 1553, so in this second instance our chronology is perfectly correct.

THE third eclipse of the sun happened in the 7th year of the reign of Yafous II. in Magabit, the seventh month of the Abyssinians. Now Yafous came to the crown in 1729, so that the 7th year of his reign will be in 1736, and on the 4th day of October, answering to the 8th day of the month Tekemt, N. S. in that year, we see this eclipse observed in Europe.

As a further confirmation of this, we have stated the particulars of a comet which, the Abyssinian annals say, appeared at Gondar in the month of November, in the 9th year of the reign of Yafous I. and as this comet was observed in Europe to have come to its perihelion in December 1689, and as that year, according to our account, was really the 9th of that king's reign, no further proof of the exactness of our chronology can possibly be required. By means of these observations, counting backward to the time of Icon Amlac, and again forward to the death of Joas, which happened in 1768, and assigning to each prince the number of years that his own historians say he reigned, I have, in the most unexceptionable manner that I can devise, settled the chronology of this country; and the exact agreement it hath with all the remarkable events, regularly and sufficiently vouched, plainly shews the accuracy of this method.

thod. If, therefore, in a few cases, I differ two or three years from the Jesuits in their first account of this country, I do not in any shape believe the fault to be mine, because there are, at all these periods, errors in point of fact, both in Alvarez and Tellez, much more material and unaccountable than the mistake of a few years; and these errors have been adopted with great confidence in the *Hispania Illustrata*, and some of the best books of Portuguese history which have made mention of this country.



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# T R A V E L S

TO DISCOVER

## THE SOURCE OF THE NILE.

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### B O O K VI.

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FIRST ATTEMPT TO DISCOVER THE SOURCE OF THE NILE FRUSTRATED—A SUCCESSFUL JOURNEY THITHER, WITH A FULL ACCOUNT OF EVERY THING RELATING TO THAT CELEBRATED RIVER.

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#### C H A P. I.

*The Author made Governor of Ras el Feel.*

**I** SOON received an instance of kindness from Ayto Confu which gave me great pleasure on several accounts. On the south part of Abyssinia, on the frontiers of Sennaar, is a hot, unwholesome, low stripe of country, inhabited entirely by Mahometans, divided into several small districts, known by the general name of Mazaga. Of this I have



have often before spoken, and shall have further occasion in the sequel.

THE ARABS of Sennaar that are on bad terms with the governor of Atbara, fly hither across the desert to avoid the rapine and violence of that cruel tyrant. The arrival of these produces in an instant the greatest plenty at Ras el Feel; markets are held everywhere; cattle of all kinds, milk, butter, elephants teeth, hides, and several other commodities, are sold to a great amount.

THE ARABS are of many different tribes; the chief are the Daveina, then the Nile. These, besides getting a good market, and food for their cattle and protection for themselves, have this great additional advantage, they escape the Fly, and consequently are not pillaged; as the rest of the Arabs in Atbara are, when changing abodes to avoid the havock made by that insect. In return for this, they constantly bring horses from Atbara, below Sennaar, for the king's own use, and for such of his cavalry who are armed with coats of mail, no Abyssinian horse, or very few at least, being capable of that burden.

AYTO CONFU had many districts of land from his father Kasmati Netcho, as well as some belonging to his mother Ozoro Esther, which lay upon that frontier; it was called Ras el Feel, and had a fendick and nagareet, but, as it was governed always by a deputy who was a Mahometan, it had no rank among the great governments of the state. Besides these lands, the patrimony of Confu, Ras Michael had given him more, and with them this government, young as he was, from favour to his mother Ozoro Esther.

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This Mahomeran deputy was named Abdel Jelleel, a great coward, who had refused to bring out his men, tho' summoned, to join the king when marching against Fafil. He had also quarrelled with the Daveina, and robbed them, so that they traded no more with Ras el Feel, brought no more horses, and the district was consequently nearly ruined, whilst a great outcry was raised against Abdel Jelleel by the merchants who used to trade at that market, not having now money enough to pay the *meery*.

AMMONIOS, his Billetana Gueta, was the person Ayto Confu had destined to go to Ras el Feel to reduce it to order, and displace Abdel Jelleel; but Ras Michael had put him as a man of trust over the black horse under me, so he was employed otherwise. Confu himself was now preparing to go thither to settle another deputy in the place of Abdel Jelleel, and he had asked the assistance of troops from the king, by which this came, to my knowledge.

THE first time I saw Ozoro Esther, I told her, that, unless she had a mind to have her son die speedily, she should, by every means in her power, dissuade him from his journey to Ras el Feel, being a place where the bloody flux never ceased to rage: and this complaint had never perfectly left him since he had the small-pox, but had wore him to a shadow. There could be no surer way therefore of destroying him than letting him go thither as he proposed. He had been for some time indeed taking bark, which had done him great service. His mother Ozoro Esther, the Iteghè, whose first favourite he was, and all his friends, now took the alarm, upon which the Ras forbade him positively to go.

NEGADE RAS MAHOMET, of whom we have already spoken, brother to Hagi Saleh, who had procured me my first lodging at Gondar, was head of all the Mahometans in that capital, nay, I may say, in Abyssinia. He, too, was a favourite of the Ras, and shewed the same attachment to me, on account of Metical Aga, as had his brother Saleh. This man came to me one morning, and told me, that Yafine, whom I had brought with me to Abyssinia, and was recommended to me by Metical Aga, had married Abdel Jelleel's daughter, and that a son of Saleh had married a daughter of Yafine's. He said there was not a man in Abyssinia that was a braver foldier and better horseman than Yafine; that he had no love for money, but was a man of probity and honour, as indeed I had always found him; that the people of Ras cl Feel, to a man, wished to have him for their governor in the room of Abdel Jelleel; and that all the Arabs, as well as Shickh Fidele, governor of Atbara, for Sennaar, wished the same.

MAHOMET did not dare to speak for fear of Ozoro Esther, who was thought to favour Abdel Jelleel, but he promised, that, if Ayto Confu would appoint him instead of Abdel Jelleel, he would give him 50 ounces of gold, besides what Yafine should allow upon his settlement, and would manage the affair with Michael when he had leave so to do. He added, that his brother Saleh should furnish Yafine with 200 men from the Mahometans at Gondar, completely armed with their firelocks, and commanded by young Saleh in person.

I was not at this time any judge of the expediency of the measure; but one resolution I had made, and determined

mined to keep, that I never would accept a post or employment for myself, or solicit any such for others. My reader will see, that, for my own safety, most unwillingly I had been obliged to break the first of these resolutions almost as soon as it was formed, and I was now deliberating whether it was not better that I should break the other for the same reason. Two things weighed with me extremely, the experience of Yafine's prudence and attachment to me during the whole journey, and my determination to return by Sennaar, and never trust myself more in the hands of that bloody assassin the Naye of Masuah, who I understood had, at several times, manifested his bad intentions towards me when I should return by that island.

I FLATTERED myself, that great advantage would accrue to me by Yafine's friendship with the Arabs and the Shekh of Atbara; and, having consulted Ayto Aylo first, I made him propose it to Ozoro Esther. I found, upon speaking to that princess, that there was something embroiled in the affair. She did not answer directly, as usual, and I apprehended that the objection was to Yafine. I was no longer in doubt of this, when Ozoro Esther told me Abba Salama had strongly espoused the cause of Abdel Jelleel, who had bribed him. Notwithstanding this, I resolved to mention it myself to Confu, that I might have it in my power to know where the objection lay, and give a direct answer to Yafine.

I SAW Confu soon after at Koscam. His bark being exhausted, I brought him more, and he seemed to be much better, and in great spirits. The time was favourable in all its circumstances, and I entered into the matter directly. I

was very much surprised to hear him say gravely, and without hesitation, "I have as good an opinion of Yafine as you can have; and I have as bad a one of Abdel Jelleel as any man in Gondar, for which, too, I have sufficient reason, as it is but lately the king told me pcevishly enough, I did not look to my affairs, (which is true) as he understood that the district was ruined by having been neglected. But I am no longer governor of Ras el Feel, I have resigned it. I hope they will appoint a wiser and better man; let him choose for his deputy Yafine, or who else he pleases, for I have sworn by the head of the Iteghè, I will not meddle or make with the government of Ras el Feel more.

TECLA MARIAM, the king's secretary, came in at that instant with a number of other people. I wanted to take Confu aside to ask him further if he knew who this governor was, but he shuffled among the crowd, saying, "My mother will tell you all; the man who is appointed is your friend, and I think Yafine may be the deputy." I now lost no time in going to Ozoro Esther to intercede for the government of Ras el Feel for Yafine.

Among the crowd I met first Tecla Mariam, the king's secretary, who taking me by the hand, said, with a laughing countenance, "O ho, I wish you joy; this is like a man; you are now no stranger, but one of us; why was not you at court?" I said I had no particular business there, but that I came hither to see Ayto Confu, that he might speak in favour of Yafine to get him appointed deputy of Ras el Feel. "Why don't you appoint him yourself? says he; what has Confu to do with the affair now? You don't intend always to be in leading strings? You may thank the king for yourself,

felf, but I would never advife you to fpeak one word of Yafine to him; it is not the cuftom; you may, if you please, to Confu, he knows him already. His eftate lies all around you, and he will enforce your orders if there fhould be any need."

"PARDON me, Tecla Mariam, faid I, if I do not underftand you. I came here to follicit for Yafine, that Confu or his fucceffor would appoint him their deputy, and you answer that you advife me to appoint him myfelf."—"And fo I do, replies Tecla Mariam: Who is to appoint him but you? You are governor of Ras el Feel; are you not?" I flood motionlefs with aftonifhment. "It is no great affair, fays he, and I hope you will never fee it. It is a hot, unwholefome country, full of Mahometans; but its gold is as good as any Chriftian gold whatever. I wifh it had been Begemder with all my heart, but there is a good time coming."

AFTER having recovered myfelf a little from my furprife, I went to Ayto Confu to kifs his hand as my fuperior, but this he would by no means fuffer me to do. A great dinner was provided us by the Iteghé; and Yafine being fent for, was appointed, cloathed, that is invefted, and ordered immediately to Ras el Feel to his government, to make peace with the Daveina, and bring all the horfes he could get with him from thence, or from Atbara. I fent there alfo that poor man who had given us the fmall blue beads on the road, as I have already mentioned. The having thus provided for thofe two men, and fecured, as I thought, a retreat to Senaar for myfelf, gave me the firft real pleafure that I had received fince landing at Mafuah; and that day, in company with Heikel, Tecla Mariam, Engedan, Aylo, and Guebra Denghel,

Denghel, all my great friends and the hopes of this country, I for the first time, since my arrival in Abyssinia, abandoned myself to joy.

My constitution was, however, too much weakened to bear any excesses. The day after, when I went home to Emfras, I found myself attacked with a slow fever, and, thinking that it was the prelude of an ague, with which I was often tormented, I fell to taking bark, without any remission, or, where the remission was very obscure, I shut myself up in the house, upon my constant regimen of boiled rice, with abundant draughts of cold water.

I was at this time told that there was a great commotion at Gondar; that a monk of Debra Libanos, a favourite of the Itcghè and of the king too, had excommunicated Abba Salama in a dispute about religion at the Itcheguè's house; and, the day after, Hagi Mahomet, one of Ras Michael's tent-makers, who lived in the town below, through which the high road from Gojam passes, came to tell me, that many monks from Gojam had passed through the low town, and expressed themselves very much dissatisfied by hearing that a frank (meaning me) was in the town above. He said that when they came in fives and sevens at a time, there was no fear; but when they returned altogether (as Michael sometimes made them do) they were like so many madmen; therefore, if I resolved to stay at Emfras, he wished I would order him send me some Mahometan soldiers, who would strictly act as I commanded them.

At the same time I received news that my great friend, Tecla Mariam, and his daughter of the same name, the  
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most beautiful woman in Abyssinia after Ozoro Esther, were both ill at Gondar. There needed no more for me to repair instantly thither. I muffled my head up as great officers generally do when riding near the capital. I passed at different times above twenty of these fanatics on the road, six and seven together; but either they did not know me, or at least, if they did, they did not say any thing; I came to Ayto Aylo's, who was sitting, complaining of sore eyes, with the queen's chamberlain, Ayto-Heikel.

AFTER the usual salutation, I asked Aylo what was the matter in town? and if it was true that Sebaat Gzier had excommunicated Abba Salama? and told him that I had conceived these disputes about faith had been long ago settled. He answered with an affected gravity, "That it was not so; that this was of such importance that he doubted it would throw the country into great convulsions; and he would not advise me to be seen in the street."—"Tell me, I beseech you, said I, what it is about. I hope not the old story of the Franks?"—"No, no, says he, a great deal worse than that, it is about Nebuchadnezzar:"—and he broke out in a great fit of laughter. "The monk of Debra Libanos says, that Nebuchadnezzar is a saint; and Abba Salama says that he was a Pagan, Idolater, and a Turk, and that he is burning in hell fire with Dathan and Abiram."—"Very well, said I, I cannot think he was a Mahometan if he was a Pagan and Idolater; but I am sure I shall make no enemies upon this dispute."—"You are deceived, says he; unless you tell your opinion in this country you are reckoned an enemy to both parties. Stay, therefore, all night, and do not appear on the streets;" and, upon my telling them I was going to Tecla Mariam's, who was ill, they rose with me to go thither, for



for the strictest friendship subsisted between them. We met there with Ozoro Esther, who was visiting the beautiful Tecla Mariam in her indisposition. Seeing Aylo, Heikel, and me together at that time of night, she insisted that the young lady and I should be married, and she declared roundly she would see it done before she left the house. As neither of my patients were very ill, a great deal of mirth followed. Ozoro Esther sat late; there was no occasion for the compliment of seeing her home, she had above three hundred men with her.

AFTER she was gone the whole discourse turned upon religion, what we believed or did not believe in our country, and this continued till day-light, when we all agreed to take a little sleep, then breakfast, and go to court. We did so, but Aylo went to Koscam, and Tecla Mariam to the Ras, so I met none of them with the king. When I went in he was hearing a pleading upon a cause of some consequence, and paying great attention. One of the parties had finished, the other was replying with a great deal of graceful action, and much energy and eloquence.—They were bare down to their very girdle, and would seem rather prepared for boxing than for speaking.

THIS being over, the room was cleared, and I made my prostration. “I do demand of you, says the king abruptly, Whether Nebuchadnezzar is a faint or no?” I bowed, saying, “Your majesty knows I am no judge of these matters, and it makes me enemies to speak about them.”—“I know, says he gravely, that you will answer my question when I ask it; let me take care of the rest.”—“I never thought, said I, Sir, that Nebuchadnezzar had any pretensions to be a

'faint. He was a scourge in God's hand, as is famine or the plague, but that does not make either of them a wholesome visitation."—"What! says he, Does not God call him his servant? Does he not say that he did his bidding about Tyre, and that he gave him Egypt to plunder for his recompence? Was not it by God's command he led his people into captivity? and did not he believe in God, when Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego escaped from the fiery furnace? Surely he must be a faint."—"I am perfectly satisfied, said I, and give my consent to his canonization, rather than either your majesty, or Abba Salama, should excommunicate me upon the question." He now laughed out, and seemed greatly diverted, and was going to speak, when Tecla Mariam, and a number of others, came in. I withdrew to the side with respect, as the secretary had a small piece of paper in his hand. He staid about two minutes with the king, when the room filled, and the levee began. I wished Tecla Mariam might not be the worse for last night's sitting up. "The better, the better, says he, much the better. You see we are becoming all good, day and night we are busy about religion."—"Are you upon Nebuchadnezzar to-day, friend? said I; the king says to me he is a faint."—"Just such a faint, I suppose, says he, as our Ras Michael, who, I believe, is jealous of him, for he is going himself to decide this dispute immediately. Go to the Ashoa\* and you will hear it."

THERE was a number of people in the outer court of the king's house, crying very tumultuously for a convocation of the church. At twelve o'clock there was no word of Mi-

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\* The largest court, or outer space, surrounding the king's house.

chael at the palace ; but I saw the members of the council there, and expected he was coming. Instead of this, the large kettle-drum, or nagareet, called *the lion*, was carried to the king's gate, which occasioned great speculation. But presently proclamation was made in these words, given me by Tecla Mariam himself:—"Hear! hear! hear! they that pretend they do not hear this, will not be the last punished for disobeying:—Whereas many disorderly and idle persons have flocked to this capital for some days past, and brought no provisions for themselves or others, and have frightened the country people from coming to market, whereby all degrees of men, in this capital, are threatened with famine, and scarcity is already begun; this is, therefore, to give notice, That if any such people, after twelve o'clock to-morrow, be found in this city, or in the roads adjoining thereto, they shall be punished like rebels and robbers, and their fault not prescribed for seven years."

AND, in about ten minutes afterwards, another proclamation was made:—"The king orders four hundred Galla of his troops to patrol the streets all the night, and disperse summarily all sorts of people that they shall find gathered together; commands thirty horse to patrol between DebraTzai and Kolla, thirty on the road to Woggora, and thirty on that to Emfras, to protect our subjects coming to market, and going about their other lawful business: They that are wise will keep themselves well when they are so." There was no need of a second proclamation. The monks were all wise, and returned, in an instant every man to his home. The Galla were mentioned to terrify only, for they did not exist, Ozoro Elther having cleared the palace of that nation; but the monks knew there would be found people in their place.

every bit as bad as Galla, and did not choose to risk the trial of the difference.

At this time a piece of bad news was circulated at Gondar, that Kasmati Boro, whom the Ras had left governor at Damot, had been beaten by Fasil, and obliged to retire to his own country in Gojam, to Stadis Amba, near the passage of the Nile, at Minè; and that Fasil, with a larger army of stranger Galla than that he had brought to Fagitta, had taken possession of Burè, the usual place of his residence. This being privately talked of as true, I asked Kefla Yafous in confidence what he knew of it. Upon its being confirmed, I could not disguise my sorrow, as I conceived that unexpected turn of affairs to be an invincible obstacle to my reaching the source of the Nile. "You are mistaken, says Kefla Yafous to me, it is the best thing can happen to you. Why you desire to see those places I do not know, but this I am sure of, you never will arrive there with any degree of safety while Fasil commands. He is as perfect a Galla as ever forded the Nile; he has neither word, nor oath, nor faith that can bind him; he does mischief for mischief's sake, and then laughs at it."

"MICHAEL, after the battle of Fagitta, proposed to his army to pass the rainy season at Burè, and quarter the troops in the towns and villages about. He would have staid a year with them, to shew that Fasil could not help them, but he was over-ruled. At Hydar Michael (that is, in November next) all Abyssinia will march against him, and he will not stay for us, and this time we shall not leave his country till we have eaten it bare; and then, at your ease, you will see every thing, defend yourself by your own

force, and be beholden to nobody ; and remember what I say, peace with Fasil there never will be, for he does not desire it ; nor, till you see his head upon a pole, or Michael's army encamped at Burè, will you (if you are wise) ever attempt to pass Maitsha." Memorable words ! often afterwards reflected upon, though they were not strictly verified in the extent they were meant when spoken.

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## CHAP. II.

*Battle of Banja—Conspiracy against Michael—The Author retires to Emfras—Description of Gondar, Emfras, and Lake Tzana.*

**A**FTER Fasil's defeat at Fagitta, and the affront he received at Afsoa in the heart of his own country, he had continued his route to Buré, a district of the Agows, where was his constant residence. After this he had crossed the Nile into the country of Bizamo, and Boro de Gago had taken up his residence at Buré, when Michael returned to Gondar; but no sooner had he heard of his arrival in those parts than he marched with a number of horse, and forced his rival to retire to Gojam.

THE Agows were all loyalists in their hearts, had been forced to join Fasil, but, immediately after his defeat, had declared for Michael. The first thing, therefore, Fasil did, when returned to Buré, was to attack the Agows on every side; a double advantage was sure to follow this victory, the famishing his enemies at Gondar, and converting so rich a territory to his own use, by extirpating the Agows, and lay-  
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ing it open to be possessed by his countrymen, the Galla, from Bizamo.

A VERY obstinate battle was fought at Banja, one of their principal settlements, in which the Agows were entirely defeated, seven of their chiefs killed, all men of great consequence, among whom was Ayamico, a very near relation of the king. The news were first brought by a son of Nanna Georgis, chief of the Agows, who escaped from the battle. Michael was at dinner, and I was present. It was one of his carousals for the marriage of Powussen, when young Georgis came into the room, in a torn and dirty habit, unattended, and almost unperceived, and presented himself at the foot of the table. Michael had then in his hand a cup of gold, it being the exclusive privilege of the governor of the province of Tigré to drink out of such a cup; it was full of wine; before a word was spoke, and, upon the first appearance of the man, he threw the cup and wine upon the ground, and cried out, I am guilty of the death of these people. Every one arose, the table was removed, and Georgis told his misfortune, that Nanna Georgis his father, Zeegam Georgis, the next in rank among them, Ayamico the king's relation, and four other chiefs, were slain at Banja, and their race nearly extirpated by a victory gained with much bloodshed, and after cruelly pursued in retaliation for that of Fagitta.

A COUNCIL was immediately called, where it was resolved, that, though the rainy season was at hand, the utmost expedition should be made to take the field; that Gusho and Powussen should return to their provinces, and increase their army to the utmost of their power; that the king should

should take the low road by Foggora and Dara, there to join the troops of Begemder and Amhara, cross the Nile at the mouth of the lake, above the second cataract, as it is called, and march thence straight to Buré, which, by speedy marches, might be done in five or six days. No resolution was ever embraced with more alacrity; the cause of the Agows was the cause of Gondar, or famine would else immediately follow. The king's troops and those of Michael were already, and had just refreshed themselves by a week's festivity.

Gusho and Powussen, after having sworn to Michael that they never would return without Fasil's head, decamped next morning with very different intentions in their hearts; for no sooner had they reached Begemder than they entered into a conspiracy in form against Michael, which they had long meditated; they had resolved to make peace with Fasil, and swear with him a solemn league, that they were but to have one cause, one council, and one interest, till they had deprived Michael of his life and dignity. The plan was, that, in hopes to join with them, the army should pass by Dara and the mouth of the lake, as aforesaid, between that lake, called the lake of Dembea, on the north side, and another small lake, which seems formerly to have been part of the great one, and is called Court-ohha; on the south is the village of Derdera, and the church of St Michael. Here was to be the scene of action; as soon as Michael advanced to Derdera, Gusho and Powussen were to close him behind on the north; Fasil, from Maitsha, was to appear on his front from the south, whilst, between Court-ohha and the lake, in the midst of these three armies, Michael was to lose his liberty or his life. The secret was profoundly kept, though known by many; but every one was employed in preparations



preparations for the campaign on the king's part, and no suspicion entertained, for nothing costs an Abyssinian less than to dissemble.

It had been agreed by Gusho and Powussen before parting, in order to deceive Michael, that, should Fasil retire from Buré at their approach, and pass the Nile into his own country, the King, Ras Michael, and part of the army should remain at Buré all the rainy season; that, upon the return of the fair weather, they were all again to assemble at Buré, cross the Nile into Bizamo, and lay waste the country of the Galla, that the vestige of habitation should not be seen upon it.

ALL this time I found myself declining in health, to which the irregularities of the last week had greatly contributed. The King and Ras had sufficiently provided tents and conveniencies for me, yet I wanted to construct for myself a tent, with a large slit in the roof, that I might have an opportunity of taking observations with my quadrant, without being inquired by troublesome or curious visitors. I therefore obtained leave from the king to go to Emfras, a town about twenty miles south from Gondar, where a number of Mahometan tent-makers lived. Gusho had a house there, and a pleasant garden, which he very willingly gave me the use of, with this advice, however, which at the time I did not understand, rather to go on to Amhara with him, for I should there sooner recover my health, and be more in quiet than with the King or Michael. As the king was to pass immediately under this town, and as most of those that loaded and unloaded his tents and baggage

were Mahometans, and lived at Emfras, I could not be better situated, or more at my liberty and ease, than there.

AFTER having taken my leave of the king and the Ras, I paid the same compliment to the Iteghè at Koscam : I had not for several days been able to wait upon her, on account of the riots during the marriage, where the Ras required my attendance, and would admit of no excuse. That excellent princess endeavoured much to dissuade me from leaving Gondar. She treated the intention of going to the source of the Nile as a fantastical folly, unworthy of any man of sense or understanding, and very earnestly advised me to stay under her protection at Koscam, till I saw whether Ras Michael and the king would return, and then take the first good opportunity of returning to my own country through Tigré, the way that I came, before any evil should overtake me.

I EXCUSED myself the best I could. It was not easy to do it with any degree of conviction, to people utterly unlearned, and who knew nothing of the prejudice of ages in favour of the attempt I was engaged in. I therefore turned the discourse to professions of gratitude for benefits that I had every day received from her, and for the very great honour that she then did me, when she condescended to testify her anxiety concerning the fate of a poor unknown traveller like me, who could not possibly have any merit but what arose from her own gracious and generous sentiments, and universal charity, that extended to every object in proportion as they were helpless. " See, see, says she, how every day of our life punishes us with proofs of the perverseness and contradiction of human nature ; you are

come from Jerufalem, through vile Turkish governments, and hot, unwholfome climates, to fee a river and a bog, no part of which you can carry away were it ever fo valuable, and of which you have in your own country a thoufand larger, better, and cleaner, and you take it ill when I difcourage you from the purfuit of this fancy, in which you are likely to perifh, without your friends at home ever hearing when or where the accident happened. While I, on the other hand, the mother of kings who have fat upon the throne of this country more than thirty years, have for my only wifh, night and day, that, after giving up every thing in the world, I could be conveyed to the church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerufalem, and beg alms for my fubfiftence all my life after, if I could only be buried in the ftreet within fight of the gate of that temple where our bleffed Saviour once lay." This was faid in the moft melancholy tone poffible, an unufual gloom hanging upon her countenance. Her defiring me, however, to ftay at Kofcam, till I knew whether the king and Michael would return or not, confidering the large army they were to lead to the field, and the feeblenefs of the fo-often defeated Fafil, made me from that instant apprehend that there was fomething behind with which I was yet unacquainted.

GOLD, and orders for cattle and provifions while at Emfras, followed this converfation with the queen; this, indeed, had never failed at other times, which, by Ayto Aylo's advice, I never more refufed. Here I cannot help obferving the different manner in which three people did the fame thing. "When I received gold from Michael, it was openly from his hand to mine, without compliment, as he paid the reft of the king's fervants. When I received it from the  
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king, it was likewise from his own hand; it was always when alone, with a fear expressed that I suffered myself to be straitened rather than ask, and that I did not levy, with sufficient severity, the money the several places allotted to me were bound to pay, which, indeed, was always the case. The queen, on the other hand, from whom I received constant donations, never either produced gold herself, nor spoke of it before or after, but sent it by a servant of hers to a servant of mine, to employ it for the necessities of my family.

I CONFESS I left the queen very much affected with the disposition I had found her in, and, if I had been of a temper to give credit to prognostics, and a safe way had been opened through Tigré, I should at that time, perhaps, have taken the queen's advice, and returned without seeing the fountains of the Nile, in the same manner that all the travellers of antiquity, who had ever as yet endeavoured to explore them, had been forced to do; but the prodigious bustle and preparation which I found was daily making in Gondar, and the assurances everybody gave me that, safe in the middle of a victorious army, I should see, at my leisure, that famous spot, made me resume my former resolutions, awakened my ambition, and made me look upon it as a kind of treason done to my country, in which such efforts were then making for discoveries, to renounce, now it was in my power, the putting them in possession of that one which had baffled the courage and perseverance of the bravest men in all ages. The pleasure, too, of herborising in an unknown country, such as Emfras was, of continuing to do so in safety, and the approaching every day to the end of my wishes, chased away all those gloomy apprehensions

which I imbibed from the appearance and discourse of the queen, and of which I now began to be ashamed.

GONDAR, the metropolis of Abyssinia, is situated upon a hill of considerable height, the top of it nearly plain, on which the town is placed. It consists of about ten thousand families in times of peace; the houses are chiefly of clay, the roofs thatched in the form of cones, which is always the construction within the tropical rains. On the west end of the town is the king's house, formerly a structure of considerable consequence; it was a square building, flanked with square towers; it was formerly four storeys high, and, from the top of it, had a magnificent view of all the country southward to the lake Tzana. Great part of this house is now in ruins, having been burnt at different times; but there is still ample lodging in the two lowest floors of it, the audience-chamber being above one hundred and twenty feet long.

A succession of kings have built apartments by the side of it of clay only, in the manner and fashion of their own country; for the palace itself was built by masons from India, in the time of Facilidas, and by such Abyssinians as had been instructed in architecture by the Jesuits without embracing their religion, and after remained in the country, unconnected with the expulsion of the Portuguese, during this prince's reign.

THE palace, and all its contiguous buildings, are surrounded by a substantial stone wall thirty feet high, with battlements upon the outer wall, and a parapet roof between the outer and inner, by which you can go along the whole and look

look into the street. There appears to have never been any embrasures for cannon, and the four sides of this wall are above an English mile and a half in length.

THE mountain, or hill, on which the town is situated, is surrounded on every side by a deep valley, which has three outlets; the one to the south to Dembea, Maitsha, and the Agows; the second to the north-west towards Sennaar, over the high mountain Debra Tzai, or the Mountain of the Sun, at the root of which Koscam, the palace of the Iteghé, is situated, and the low countries of Walkayt and Waldubba; the third is to the north to Woggora, over the high mountain Lamalmon, and so on through I'igré to the Red Sea. The river Kahha, coming from the Mountain of the Sun, or Debra Tzai, runs through the valley, and covers all the south of the town; the Angrab, falling from Woggora, surrounds it on the N. N. E. These rivers join at the bottom of the hill, about a quarter of a mile south of the town.

IMMEDIATELY upon the bank opposite to Gondar, on the other side of the river, is a large town of Mahometans of about a thousand houses. These are all active and laborious people; great part of them are employed in taking care of the king's and nobility's baggage and field-equipage, both when they take the field and when they return from it. They pitch and strike their tents with surprising facility and expedition; they load and conduct the mules and the baggage, and are formed into a body under proper officers, but never suffered, nor do they chuse, to fight on either side.

GONDAR, by a number of observations of the sun and stars made by day and night, in the course of three years, with an astronomical quadrant of three feet radius, and two excellent telescopes, and by a mean of all their small differences, is in lat.  $12^{\circ} 34' 30''$ ; and by many observations of the satellites of Jupiter, especially the first, both in their immersions and emersions during that period, I concluded its longitude to be  $37^{\circ} 33' 0'$  east from the meridian of Greenwich.

It was the 4th of April 1770, at eight o'clock in the morning, when I set out from Gondar. We passed the Kahha, and the Mahometan town, and, about ten in the morning, we came to a considerable river called the Mogetch, which runs in a deep, rugged bed of flakey blue stones. We crossed it upon a very solid, good bridge of four arches, a convenience seldom to be met with in passing Abyssinian rivers, but very necessary on this, as, contrary to most of their streams, which become dry, or stand in pools, on the approach of the sun, the Mogetch runs constantly, by reason that its sources are in the highest hills of Woggora, where clouds break plentifully at all seasons of the year. In the rainy months it rolls a prodigious quantity of water into the lake Tzana, and would be absolutely unpassable to people bringing provision to the market, were it not for this bridge built by Facilidas; yet it is not judiciously placed, being close to the mountain's foot, in the face of a torrent, where it runs strongest, and carries along with it stones of a prodigious size, which luckily, as yet, have injured no part of the bridge. The water of the river Mogetch is not wholesome, probably from the minerals, or stony particles it carries along with it, and the stately strata over which it

runs. We have many rivers of this quality in the Alps, especially between mount Cenis and Grenoble.

DELIVERED now from the strait and rugged country on the banks of the Mogetch, we entered into a very extensive plain, bounded on the east side by the mountains, and on the west by the large lake of Dembea, otherwise called the lake Tzana, or Bahar Tzana, the Sea of Tzana, which geographers have corrupted into the word Barcena. Rejoiced at last that I had elbow-room, I began the most laborious search for shrubs and herbs all over the plain, my servants on one side and I on the other, searching the country on each side of the road. It appeared to our warm imaginations, that the neighbourhood of such a lake, in so remote a part of the world, ought infallibly to produce something perfectly beautiful, or altogether new. In this, however, we were disappointed, as indeed we always were in meadows, and where grass grew so exuberantly as it did all over this plain.

At eleven o'clock we crossed the river Tedda; here the road divides: that branch to the east leads to Wechnè, in the wild, uncultivated territory of Belclessen, famous for no production but that of honey.

We continued along the other branch of the road, which led south to Emfras. One mile distant on our left is the church of St George. About one o'clock we halted at the church Zingetch Mariam; and a few minutes after, we passed the river Gomara, a considerable stream rising in Belclessen, which stands in pools during the dry weather, but  
had



had now begun to run ; its course N. E. and S. W. across the plain, after which it falls into the lake Tzana.

At two we halted at Correva, a small village, beautifully situated on a gentle-rising ground, through which the road passes in view of the lake, and then again divides ; one branch continuing south to Emfras, and so on to Foggora and Dara ; the other to Mitraha, two small islands in the lake, lying S. W. from this at the distance of about four hours journey. The road from Correva to Emfras, for the first hour, is all in the plain ; for the second, along the gentle slope of a mountain of no considerable height ; and the remainder is upon a perfect flat, or along the lake Tzana.

THE 5th of April, at five in the morning, we left our present station at Correva, where, though we had employed several hours in the search, we found very little remarkable of either plants or trees, being mostly of the kind we had already seen. We continued our road chiefly to the south, through the same sort of country, till we came to the foot of a mountain, or rather a hill, covered with bushes and thorny trees, chiefly the common acacia, but of no size, and seeming not to thrive. I pitched my tent here to search what that cover would produce. There were a great quantity of hares, which I could make no use of, the Abyssinians holding them in abhorrence, as thinking them unclean ; but, to make amends, I found great store of Guinea fowls, of the common grey kind we have in Europe, of which I shot, in a little time, above a score ; and these, being perfectly lawful food, proved a very agreeable variety from the raw beef, butter, and honey, which we had lived upon hitherto,

and which was to be our diet (it is not an unpleasant one, at least a part of it) till we reached Emfras.

At eight in the morning I passed through Tangouri, a considerable village. About a hundred yards on the right from this we have a finer prospect of the lake than even from Correva itself. This village is chiefly inhabited by Mahometans, whose occupation it is to go in caravans far to the south, on the other side of the Nile, through the several districts of Galla, to whom they carry beads and large needles, cohol, or Stibium, myrrh, coarse cloths made in Begemder, and pieces of blue cotton cloths from Surat, called Marowti. They are generally nearly a year absent, and bring in return slaves, civet, wax, hides, and cardomum in large beautiful pods; they bring likewise a great quantity of ginger, but that is from farther south, nearer Narea. It appears to me to be a poor trade, as far as I could compute it, considering the loss of time employed in it, the many accidents, extortions, and robberies these merchants meet with. Whether it would be ever worth while to follow it on another footing, and under another government, is what I am not qualified enough to say.

On the left of Tangouri, divided from it by a plain of about a mile in breadth, stands a high rock called Amba Mariam, with a church upon the very summit of it. There is no possibility of climbing this rock but at one place, and there it is very difficult and rugged; here the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages retreat upon any sudden alarm or inroad of an enemy.

AT nine o'clock, after passing a plain, with the lake Tzana all the way on our right, in length about three miles, we came to the banks of the river Gorno, a small but clear stream; it rises near Wechnè, and has a bridge of one arch over it about half a mile above the ford. Its course is north and south nearly, and loses itself in the lake between Mitraha and Lamguè. A mile farther we arrived at Emfras, after a very pleasant, though not interesting excursion.

THE town is situated on a steep hill, and the way up to it is almost perpendicular like the ascent of a ladder. The houses are all placed about the middle of the hill, fronting the west, in number about 300. Above these houses are gardens, or rather fields, full of trees and bushes, without any sort of order, up to the very top. Emfras commands a view of the whole lake, and part of the country on the other side. It was once a royal residence. On a small hill is a house of Hatzé Hannes, in form of a square tower, now going fast to ruin.

EMFRAS is in lat.  $12^{\circ} 12' 38''$  N. and long.  $37^{\circ} 38' 30''$  E. of the meridian of Greenwich. The distances and directions of this journey from Gondar were carefully observed by a compass, and computed by a watch of Ellicot's, after which these situations were checked by astronomical observations of latitude and longitude in every way that they could be taken, and it was very seldom in a day's journey, that we erred a mile in our computation.

THE lake of Tzana is by much the largest expanse of water known in that country. Its extent, however, has been

greatly exaggerated. Its greatest breadth is from Dingleber to Languè, which, in a line nearly east and west, is 35 miles ; but it decreases greatly at each extremity, where it is not sometimes above ten miles broad. Its greatest length is from Bab Baha to a little S. W. and by W. of that part, where the Nile, after having crossed the end of it by a current always visible, turns towards Dara in the territory of Alata, which is 49 miles from north to south, and which extent this lake has in length. In the dry months, from October to March, the lake shrinks greatly in size ; but after that all those rivers are full which are on every side of it, and fall into the lake, like radii drawn to a center, then it swells, and extends itself into the plain country, and has of course a much larger surface.

THERE are forty-five inhabited islands in the lake, if you believe the Abyssinians, who, in every thing, are very great liars. I conceive the number may be about eleven : the principal is Dek, or Daka, or Daga \*, nearly in the middle of the lake ; its true extent I cannot specify, never having been there. Besides Dek, the other islands are Halimoon, nearer Gondar ; Briguida, nearer Gorgora, and still farther in Galila. All these islands were formerly used as prisons for the great people, or for a voluntary retreat, on account of some disgust or great misfortune, or as places of security to deposit their valuable effects during troublesome times. When I was in Abyssinia, a few weeks after what I have been relating, 1300 ounces of gold, confided by the queen to Wel-

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\* It signifies the hill, or high ground.

Ieta Christos, her governor of Dek, a man of extraordinary sanctity, who had fasted for forty years, was stolen away by that priest, who fled and hid himself; nor would the queen ever suffer him to be searched after or apprehended.



CHAP.



## CHAP. III.

*The King encamps at Lamgué—Transactions there—Passes the Nile, and encamps at Derdera—The Author follows the King.*

ON the 12th of May we heard the king had marched to Tedda. Messengers from Begemder, and from Gusho of Amhara, had been constantly passing to and from his majesty, pressing Ras Michael to take the field as soon as possible, to prevent the utter destruction of the Agows, which Fasil every day was striving to accomplish. They put him, moreover, in mind, that the rains were begun; that, in Fasil's country, they were already sufficient to swell the many rivers they had to pass before they arrived at Burè; they desired him to reflect, that, with the armies they were bringing to his assistance, it was more necessary to save time than stay for a number of troops; lastly, that it was absolutely useless to wait for any reinforcement from Tigrè, but that he should rather march by Emfras, Foggora, and Dara, cross the Nile where it comes out of the lake; while they, with their

their united armies, passed at the bridge near the second cataract, sixteen miles below, burnt and laid waste Woodage, Afahel's country, and joined him at Derdera, between Court-ohha and the lake. This was precisely what Ras Michael himself had planned; it embraced the whole country of his enemy, and made his scheme of vengeance complete; hitherto not a word had transpired that could raise the smallest suspicion of treachery.

THE 13th, by day-break, Netcho, Fit-Auraris to Ras Michael, passed in great haste below the town towards Foggora. The king had made a forced march from Tedda, and was that night to encamp at a house of Gusho's, near Lamguè. This was great expedition, and sufficiently marked the eagerness with which it was undertaken. The effects of the approach of the army were soon seen. Every one hid what was best in his house, or fled to the mountains with it. Emfras in a few hours was left quite empty: Ras Michael, advancing at the head of an army, spread as much terror as would the approach of the day of judgment. It was then

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Destruction in a monarch's voice  
Cried havock, and let slip the dogs of war.

For, strict and just as he was in time of peace, or in preserving the police, the security of the ways, and the poor from the tyranny of the rich, he was most licentious and cruel the moment he took the field, especially if that country which he entered had ever shewn the least tincture of enmity against him.

ABOUT 11 o'clock in the morning the king's Fit-Auraris passed. He was a near relation of Ayamico, one of the chiefs of the Agows who was a relation of the king, as I have before mentioned, and slain by Fafil at the battle of Banja. With him I had contracted a great degree of friendship; he had about 50 horse and 200 foot: as he passed at several places he made proclamation in name of the king, That nobody should leave their houses, but remain quiet in them without fear, and that every house found empty should be burnt. He sent a servant as he passed, telling me the king was that night to lie at Lamgué, and desiring me to send him what spirits I could spare, which I accordingly did, upon his providing a man who could protect the houses adjoining mine from the robbery and the violence of which the inhabitants were in hourly fear.

ABOUT the close of the evening we heard the king's kettle-drums. Forty-five of these instruments constantly go before him, beating all the way while he is on his march. The Mahometan town near the water was plundered in a minute; but the inhabitants had long before removed every thing valuable. Twenty different parties of stragglers came up the hill to do the same by Emfras. Some of the inhabitants were known, others not so, but their houses had nothing in them; at last these plunderers all united in mine, demanding meat and drink, and all sort of accommodation. Our friend, left with us by the Fit-Auraris, resisted as much as one man could do with sticks and whips, and it was a scuffle till mid-night; at last, having cleared ourselves of them, luckily without their setting fire to the town, we remained quiet for the rest of the night.



ON the 14th, at day-break, I mounted my horse, with all my men-servants, leaving the women-servants and an old man to take care of the house. It was very unsafe to travel in such company at such an hour. We crossed the river Arno, a little below Emfras, before we got into the plain ; after which we went at a smart gallop, and arrived at Lamgué between eight and nine o'clock.

EARLY as it was, the king was then in council, and Ras Michael, who had his advisers assembled also in his tent, had just left it to go to the king's. There was about 500 yards between their tents, and a free avenue is constantly left, in which it is a crime to stand, or even to cross, unless for messengers sent from the one to the other. The old general dismounted at the door of the tent ; and though I saw he perceived us, and was always at other times most courteous, he passed us without taking the least notice, and entered the tent of the king.

ALTHOUGH my place in the household gave me free access to wherever the king was, I did not choose, at that time, to enter the back tent, and place myself behind his chair, as I might have done ; I rather thought it better to go to the tent of Ozoro Esther, where I was sure at least of getting a good breakfast : Nor was I disappointed. As soon as I shewed myself at the door of the tent of that princess, who was lying upon a sofa, the moment she cast her eyes upon me, cried out, There is Yagoube ! there is the man I wanted ! The tent was cleared of all but her women, and she then began to enumerate of several complaints which she thought, before the end of the campaign, would carry her to her grave. It was easy to see they were of the slightest kind,

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though it would not have been agreeable to have told her so, for she loved to be thought ill, to be attended, and flattered; she was, however, in these circumstances, so perfectly good, so conversable, so elegant in all her manners, that her physician would have been tempted to wish never to see her well.

SHE was then with child by Ras Michael; and the late festival, upon her niece's marriage with Powuffen of Begemder, had been much too hard for her constitution, always weak and delicate since her first misfortunes, and the death of Mariam Barea. After giving her my advice, and directing her women how to administer what I was to send her, the doors of the tent were thrown open; all our friends came flocking round us, when we presently saw that the interval employed in consultation had not been spent uselessly, for a most abundant breakfast was produced in wooden platters upon the carpet. There were excellent stewed fowls, but so inflamed with Cayenne pepper as almost to blister the mouth; fowls dressed with boiled wheat, just once broken in the middle, in the manner they are prepared in India, with rice called *pillaw*, this, too, abundantly charged with pepper; Guinea hens, roasted hard without butter, or any sort of sauce, very white, but as tough as leather; above all, the never-failing *brind*, for so they call the collops of raw beef, without which nobody could have been satisfied; but, what was more agreeable to me, a large quantity of wheat-bread, of Dembea flour, equal in all its qualities to the best in London or Paris.

THE Abyssinians say, you must plant first and then water; nobody, therefore, drinks till they have finished eating;

after this the glafs went chearfully about; there was excellent red wine, but ftrong, of the nature of cote-roti, brought from Karoota, which is the wine country, about fix miles fouth-eaft from the place where we then were; good new brandy; honey-wine, or hydromel, and a fpecies of beer called Bouza, both of which were fermented with herbs, or leaves of trees, and made very heady; they are difagreeable liquors to ftrangers. Our kind landlady, who never had quitted her fofa, preffed about the glafs in the very briskeft manner, reminding us that our time was fhort, and that the drum would prefently give the fignal for ftriking the tents. For my part, this weighed exceedingly with me the contrary way to her intentions, for I began to fear I fhould not be able to go home, and I was not prepared to go on with the army; befides, it was indifpenfibly neceffary to fee both the king and Ras Michael, and that I by no means chofe to do when my prefence of mind had left me; I therefore made my apology to Ozoro Efther, by a meffage delivered by one of her women, and flipt out of the tent to wait upon the king.

I THOUGHT to put on my moft fedate appearance, that none of my companions in the king's tent fhould fee that I was affected with liquor; tho' intoxication in Abyffinia is neither uncommon nor a reproach, when you are not engaged in bufinefs or attendance. I therefore went on as compofedly as poffible, without recollecting that I had already advanced near a hundred yards, walking on that forbidden precinct or avenue between the king's tent and Ras Michael's, where nobody interrupted me. The cafe with which I proceeded, among fuch a crowd and bufle, foon brought

brought my transgression to my mind, and I hurried out of the forbidden place in an instant.

I MET several of my acquaintance, who accompanied me to the king's tent. It was now noon; a plentiful dinner or breakfast was waiting, which I had absolutely refused to partake of till I had seen the king. Thinking all was a secret that had passed at Ozoro Esther's, I lifted the curtain behind the king's chair, and coming round till nearly opposite to him, I was about to perform the usual prostration, when in the very instant the young prince George, who was standing opposite to me on the king his brother's right hand, stepped forward and laid his hand across my breast as if to prevent me from kneeling; then turning to the king, who was sitting as usual in his chair in the alcove, Sir, says he, before you allow Yagoube to kneel, you should first provide two men to lift him up again, for Ozoro Esther has given him so much wine that he will never be able to do it himself.

THOUGH it was almost impossible to avoid laughing, it was visible the king constrained himself, and was not pleased. The drink had really this good effect, that it made me less abashed than I otherwise should have been at this unexpected fall of the young prince. I was, however, somewhat disconcerted, and made my prostration perhaps less gracefully than at another time, and this raised the merriment of those in waiting, as attributing it to intoxication. Upon rising, the king most graciously stretched out his hand for me to kiss. While I was holding his hand, he said to his brother, coldly, Surely if you thought him drunk, you must have expected a reply; in that case, it would have

been more prudent in you, and more civil, not to have made your observation.

THE prince was much abashed. I hastened across the carpet, and took both his hands and kissed them; the laughers did not seem much at their ease, especially when I turned and stood before the king. He was kind, sensible, composed, and condescending; he complained that I had abandoned him; asked if I had been well-used at Emfras, and doubted that I had wanted every thing; but I sent you nothing on purpose, says he, because you said fasting would do you good after too much feasting at Gondar, and I knew that hunger would bring you soon back again to us. If your majesty, said I, takes the prince's word, I have been carousing to-day in your camp more than ever I did at Gondar; and, I do assure your majesty, prince George's reflections were not without foundation.

Come, come, says the king, Georgis is your firm and fast friend, and so he ought, he owes it to you that he is so able a horseman and so good a marksman, without which he could never be more than a common soldier. He has commanded a division of the army to-day;—"Of 500 horse, cries out the prince in extacy; and, when the king my brother to-morrow leads the van, you shall be my Fit-Auraris, if you please, when we pass the Nile, and with my party I shall scour Maitsha." I should be very unhappy, prince, said I, to have a charge of that importance, for which I know myself to be totally unqualified; there are many brave men who have a title to that office, and who will fill it with honour to themselves and safety to your person. So you will not trust yourself, says the prince, with me and my party when we shall cross the Nile?

Nile? Are you angry with me, Yagoube, or are you afraid of Woodage Afahel? Were you in earnest, prince, in what you now say, replied I, you suppose two things, both greater reproaches than that of being overtaken with wine. Assure yourself I am; and always shall be, your most affectionate and most faithful servant; and that I shall think it an honour to follow you in Maitsha, or elsewhere, even as a common horseman, though, instead of one, there were in it ten thousand Woodage Afahels. O ho! says the king, then you are all friends; and I must tell you one thing, Georgis is more drunk with the thoughts of his command to-day than any foldier in my camp will be to-night with bouza. And this, indeed, seemed to be the case, for he was else a prince rather reserved and sparing of words, especially before his brother.

TELL me, Yagoube, continues the king, and tell me truly—at that very instant came in a messenger from Ras Michael, who, going round the chair without saluting, spoke to the king, upon which the room was cleared; but I after learned, that news were received from Begemder, that Powussen and his troops were ready to march, but that two of Gusfo's nephews had rebelled, whom it had taken some time to subdue; that another messenger was left behind, but had fallen sick at Aringo, who, however, would come forward as soon as possible with his master's message, and would be probably at the camp that night. He brought also as undoubted intelligence, that Fasil, upon hearing Ras Michael's march, was preparing to repass the Nile into the country of the Galla. This occasioned very great doubts, because dispatches had arrived from Nanna Georgis's son, the day before at Tedda, which declared that Fasil had de-  
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camped from Buré that very day the messenger came away, advancing northward towards Gondar, but with what intention he could not say; and this was well known to be intelligence that might be strictly and certainly relied upon.

ON the 15th, the king decamped early in the morning; and, as prince George had said the night before, led the van in person; a flattering mark of confidence that Ras Michael had put in him now for the first time, of which the king was very sensible. The Ras, however, had given him a dry nurse\*, as it is called, in Billetarra Gueta Welleta Michael, an old and approved officer, trained to war from his infancy, and surrounded with the most tried of the troops of Tigré. The king halted at the river Gomara, but advanced that same night to the passage where the Nile comes out of the lake Tzana, and resumes again the appearance of a river.

THE king remained the 15th and 16th encamped upon the Nile. Several things that should have given umbrage, and begot suspicion, happened while they were in this situation. Aylo, governor of Gojam, had been summoned to assist Ras Michael when Powuffen and Gulho should march to join him with their forces of Begemder and Amhara, and his mother Ozoro Welleta Israel, then at Gondar, had promised he should not fail. This lady was younger sister to Ozoro Esther; both were daughters of the Iteghé. She was as beautiful as Ozoro Esther, but very much her inferior in behaviour, character, and conduct: she had refused the old Ras, who asked her in marriage before he was called from Tigré

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\* Maguzet.

Tigrè to Gondar, and a mortal hatred had followed her refusal. It was therefore reported, that he was heard to say, he would order the eyes of Welleta Israel to be pulled out, if Aylo her son did not join him. It must have been a man such as Ras Michael that could form such a resolution, for Welleta Israel's eyes were most captivating. She was then in the camp with her sister.

A SINGLE small tent had appeared the evening of the 15th on the other side of the Nile, and, on the morning of the 16th, Welleta Israel and the tent were missing: she boldly made her escape in the night. The tent had probably concealed her son Aylo, or some of his friends, to show her the passage; for the Nile there was both broad and deep, rolling along a prodigious mass of water, with large, black, slippery stones at the bottom. It was therefore a very arduous, bold undertaking for soldiers and men accustomed to pass rivers in the day-time; but for a woman, and in the night, too, with all the hurry that the fear of being intercepted must have occasioned, it was so extraordinary as to exceed all belief. But she was conducted by an intrepid leader, for with her deserted Ayto Engedan son of Kasmati Eshté, and consequently nephew to Ozoro Welleta Israel; but their own inclinations had given them still a nearer relation than the degree received from their parents, or decency should have permitted. All the camp had trembled for Welleta Israel; and every one now rejoiced that so bold an attempt had been attended with the success it merited. It was necessary, however, to dissemble before Michael, who, intent upon avenging the Agows against Fasil, carried his reflections at that time no further; for Aylo's not coming was attributed to the influence of Fasil, whose government of



Damot joins Gojam, and it was even said, that Wellela Ifrael, his mother, had been the occasion of this, from her hatred to Michael and her attachment to Fasil; the first cause was sufficiently apparent, the last had formerly been no less so.

On the 17th, after sun-rise, the king passed the Nile, and encamped at a small village on the other side, called Tfoom-wa, where his Fit-Auraris had taken post early in the morning. I have often mentioned this officer without explanation, and perhaps it may now be right to state his duty. The Fit-Auraris is an officer depending immediately upon the commander in chief, and corresponding with him directly, without receiving orders from any other person. He is always one of the bravest, most robust, and most experienced men in the service; he knows, with the utmost exactness, the distance of places, the depth of rivers, the state of the fords, the thickness of the woods, and the extent of them; in a word, the whole face of the country in detail. His party is always adapted to the country in which the war is; sometimes it is entirely composed of horse, sometimes of foot, but generally of a mixture of both. He has the management of the intelligence and direction of the spies. He is likewise limited to no number of troops; sometimes he has 1000 men, sometimes 200. In time of real danger he has generally about 300, all picked from the whole army at his pleasure; he had not now about 50 horse, as it was not yet thought to be the time of real business or danger.

As the post of Fit-Auraris is a place of great trust, so it is endowed with proportionable emoluments. The king's

Fit-Auraris has territories assigned him in every province that he ever passes through, so has that of the Ras, if he commands in chief. Every governor of a province has also an officer of this name, who has a revenue allowed him within his own province. It is a place of great fatigue. Their post is at different distances from the van of the army, according to the circumstances of the war; sometimes a day's march, sometimes four or six hours. As he passes on he fixes a lance, with a flag upon it, in the place where the king's tent is to be pitched that night, or where he is to halt that day. He has couriers, or light runners, through which he constantly corresponds with the army; whenever he sees the enemy, he sends immediate advice, and falls back himself, or advances farther, according as his orders are.

FROM Tfoomwa the king marched on, a short day's march, to Derdera, and encamped near the church of St Michael. Derdera, was a collection of small villages, between the lake Dembea and Court-ohha, where, it will be remembered, the agreement was the confederates should inclose Michael, and give him battle; but he had now lost all patience, as there was no appearance of either Gusfo or Powussen; and being, besides, in an enemy's country, he began to proceed in his usual manner, by giving orders to lay waste the whole adjacent territory with fire and sword. The whole line of march, two day's journey in breadth from the lake, was set on fire; the people who could not escape were slain, and every wanton barbarity permitted.

THE king's passage of the Nile was the signal given for me to set out to join him. It was the 18th of May, at noon, I left Emfras, my course being southward whilst in the plain

of Mitraha. At three o'clock we entered among a few hills of no consideration, and, soon after, began to coast close along the side of the lake Tzana; we saw this day a great number of hippopotami; some swimming in the lake at a small distance, some rising from feeding on the high grass in the meadows, and walking, seemingly at great leisure, till they plunged themselves out of sight. They are exceeding cautious and shy while on land, and not to be approached near enough to do execution with the best rifle-gun. At four in the afternoon we halted, and passed the night at Lamgué, a village situated a few paces from the side of the lake.

ON the 19th of May we left Lamgué about six in the morning, our course south and by west, and at eight we found ourselves in the middle of twenty-five or thirty villages called Nabca, stretching for the length of seven or eight miles; a few minutes afterwards we came to the river Reb, which falls into the lake a little north-west of the place where we now were. Close by where the Reb joins the lake is a small village of Pagans, called Waito, who live quite separate from the Abyssinians, and are held by them in utter abhorrence, so that to touch them, or any thing that belongs to them, makes a man unclean all that day till the evening, separates him from his family and friends, and excludes him from the church and all divine service, till he is washed and purified on the following day. Part of this aversion is certainly owing to their manner of feeding; for their only profession is killing the crocodile and hippopotamus, which they make their daily sustenance. They have a most abominable stench, are exceedingly wan, or ill-coloured, very lean, and die often, as is said, of the lousy disease. There are, indeed, no crocodiles in the lake Tzana,

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owing, as it is said, to the cataracts, which they cannot get up. However, as they are amphibious animals, and walk very well on shore, I think they might surmount this difficulty as easily as the hippopotamus; I rather think the cause is the coldness of the water and climate, which does not agree with the crocodile, but much with the river-horse.

THE Waito speak a language radically different from any of those in Abyssinia; but though I have often endeavoured to get some insight into this, their religion, and customs, I could never so far succeed as to be able to give the public any certain information. A false account in such cases is certainly worse than no account at all. I once desired the king to order that one of them might be brought to Gondar. Two men, an old and a young one, were accordingly brought from the lake, but they would neither answer nor understand any questions; partly, I believe, through fear, partly from obstinacy. The king at this became so angry that he ordered them both to be hanged; they seemed perfectly unconcerned, and it was with some difficulty I procured their release; I never therefore made an experiment of that kind afterwards. The Abyssinians believe they are forcerers, can bewitch with their eyes, and occasion death by their charms even at a considerable distance. It is likely, if that had been so, these two would have tried their power upon me, of which I do not recollect to have ever been sensible.

WE passed the Reb at nine o'clock in the morning. It rises high in the mountains of Begemder, and is one of those rivers that continue running the whole year, and has a tolerable ford, although it was visibly increased by rain.

We continued our journey in sight of many villages till, three quarters after twelve, we came to the river Gomara, where we staid in search of trees and herbs the rest of the day. At night we received a message from Ayto Adigo, Shum, or governor, of Karoota. He was an officer of confidence of the Iteghè's; had been a great friend of Mariam Barea's, one of whose vassals he was, and in his heart an inveterate enemy to Ras Michael and the new succession. Ever since the murder of Joas he had not ventured to Gondar. When I first came there the Ras had given his house, as that of an outlaw; to me. Afterwards, as soon as he returned, I offered immediately to surrender it to him; but he would not by any means accept it, but asked leave to pitch his tent in one of the courts surrounded with walls, for it was a spacious building. Perhaps it was the best situation he could have chosen, for we did him great service by the means of Ozoro Esther, as he was but very ill-looking upon, and was rich enough to be considered as an object of Ras Michael's rapacity and avarice. Our neighbourhood occasioned us to pass many evenings together, and we contracted a friendship, the rather because he was a servant of the Iteghè, and we were known favourites of Ozoro Esther.

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# THE SOURCE OF THE NILE.



## CHAP. IV.

*Pass the River Gomara—Remarkable Accident there—Arrive at Dara—Visit the great Cataract of Alata—Leave Dara, and resume our Journey.*

ON the 20th of May, between six and seven in the morning, as Adigo was not arrived, I sent the baggage and tents that we had with us forward with Strates, a Greek, who was an avowed enemy to all learned inquiries or botanical researches. My orders were to encamp at Dara, in some convenient place near the house of Negadékas Mahomet. In the mean time I staid expecting Ayto Adigo's arrival; he came near eleven o'clock. As a temporary shelter from the sun, a cloak upon cross sticks was set up, instead of a tent, to save time. We sat down together to such fare as Adigo had brought along with him; it was a soldier's dinner, coarse and plentiful. Adigo told me Kasmati Ayabdar, an uncle of Gusko, had left his house the night before, accompanied by the men of Foggora, the country where we then were of.

of which he was governor, and had taken the high road to join the forces of Begemder.

NETCHO, a near relation of the old queen, arrived from Kuara just as we were sitting down to dinner. He had about 50 horse and 200 foot, all bad troops, and ill armed; he was, however, a respectable, tried veteran, who having had many opportunities of becoming rich, gave the whole to his soldiers, and those of his dependents that lived with him; on which account he was extremely beloved, and it was hoped that, if the issue of this campaign was favourable, Ras Michael would make him governor of Kuara, in room of Coque Abou Barea, a man of a very different character, who had intruded himself into that province by the power of Fasil, and after maintained himself in it by open rebellion.

THE mules that had hitherto carried my quadrant and telescopes being bad, I had luckily kept them behind, in hopes that either Adigo or Netcho would supply me with better; and I had now placed them upon the fresh mules I had obtained, and had not sent them on with the servants, and we were then taking a friendly glass. It was, I suppose, about noon, when we saw our servants coming back, and Strates also among the rest, stript of every thing that he had, except a cotton night-cap, which he wore on his head. The servants swam over the Gomara immediately, nor was Strates interrupted, but passed at the ford. They told us that Guitho and Powussen were in rebellion against the king, and confederated with Fasil, that they were advancing fast to cut off the Ras's retreat to Gondar, and that Guebra Mehedin, and Confu, Powussen's Fit-Auraris, had fallen in  
with

with our servants ; and plundered them, as belonging to the king and the Ras.

I WAS, for some minutes, in the utmost astonishment at this torrent of bad news. Whether the others knew more than I, it is impossible to say ; dissimulation, in all ranks of these people, is as natural as breathing. Guebra Mehedin and Confu were the Iteghé's two nephews, sons of Basha Eusebius her brother, a worthless man, and his sons no better. They were young men, however, whom I saw continually at the queen's palace, and to whom I should have gone immediately without fear, if I had known their houses had been in my way, and they happened to be near Lebec at the hot wells ; notwithstanding their rank, they were of such dissipated manners, that they were of no account, but treated as castaways in the house of the queen their aunt, and never, as far as I knew, had entered into the presence of the king. I had often ate and drank with them, however, in the house of Ayto Engedan, their cousin-german, who was gone off with Welleta Israel his aunt, at the passage of the Nile as before mentioned. They had beat Strates, who was their intimate acquaintance, violently ; as also two others of my servants, to make them confess in what package the gold was. They had taken from them also a large blunderbuss, given me by the Swedish consul, Brander, at Algiers ; a pair of pistols, a double-barrelled gun, and a Turkish sword mounted with silver, which, as there was then no prospect of their being immediately needed, were sent forward with the baggage.

NETCHO and Adigo, and all present, agreed that the whole was a fiction, and that, supposing the account to be true



true that Begemder and Amhara were in rebellion, young, wild, and worthless people, like Guebra Mehedin and Confu, could never be those pitched upon for the respectable office of Fit-Auraris. The worst that could be, as they conceived, was, that some misunderstanding might subsist between Ras Michael and the governors above named, but Basil was undoubtedly the enemy of them all. They imagined therefore that this disgust, if any, would be soon got over, and concluded that it was highly absurd, in any case, to attack me, as they certainly knew that the queen, Powussen, and Gusfo, would be full as ill-pleased with it as the king or Ras Michael. It therefore appeared to them, as it also did to me, that these wild, young men, had taken the first rumour of a rebellion, as a pretence for robbing all that came in their way, and that I, unfortunately, had been the first.

We were in the middle of this conversation when the parties appeared. They had, perhaps, an hundred horse, and were scattered about a large plain, skirmishing, playing, pursuing one another, shrieking and hooping like so many frantic people. They stopt, however, upon coming nearer, seeing the respectable figure that we made, just ready to pass the ford, which alone divided us. Our servants had neither seen Netcho nor Adigo, when they went in the morning, though they knew Adigo was expected, and these marauders hoped to have intercepted me, thinly accompanied, as they had done my baggage.

GUEBRA MEHEDIN and his brother approached nearer the banks than the rest, and a servant was sent from them, who crossed the river to us, upbraiding Ayto Adigo with protecting

testing a Frank proscribed by the laws of their country, and also with marching to the assistance of Ras Michael, the murderer of his sovereign, offering at the same time to divide the spoil with him if he would surrender me and mine to him. Servants here, who carry messages in time of war between the contending parties, are held sacred like heralds. They are sent even with insults and defiance; but it is constantly understood that their errand protects them from suffering any harm, whether on the road, or when in words they perform these foolish, useless commissions.

ADIGO and Netcho were above observing this punctilio with robbers. Some were for cutting the servant's ears off, and some for carrying him bound to Ras Michael; I begged they would let him go: and Netcho sent word by him to Guebra Mehedin to get the goods and mules he had robbed us of together, for he was coming over to share them with him. The servants having given the messenger a severe drubbing with sticks, torn the cloth from about his middle, and twisted it about his neck like a cord, in that plight sent him back to Guebra Mehedin, and we all prepared to take the ford across the river. Guebra Mehedin, who saw his servant thus disgraced returning towards him, and a considerable motion among the troops, advanced a few steps with two or three more of his company, stretching forth his hand and crying out, but still at a distance that we could not hear. He was distinguished by a red sash of silk twisted about his head. I, with my servants and attendants, first passed the river at the ford, and I had no sooner got up the bank, and stood upon firm ground, than I fired two shots at him; the one, from a Turkish rifle, seemed to have given him great apprehensions, or else to have wounded him, for,

after four or five of his people had flocked about him, they galloped all off across the plain of Foggora towards Lebec.

NETCHO had passed the Gomara close after me, crying upon me to let him go first, but Adigo declared his resolution to go no farther. He hated Ras Michael; was a companion of Powussen and Gusho, as well as a neighbour, and wished for a revolution with all his heart. He, therefore, returned to Emfras and Karoota, and with him I sent five of my servants, desiring him to escort my quadrant, clock, and telescopes into the island of Mitraha, and deliver them to Tecla Georgis, the king's servant, governor of that island. Adigo, being left alone by the servants, could not be persuaded but some great treasure was hid in those boxes. He, therefore, carried them to his house, and used the servants well, but opened and examined every one of the packages. Surprised to find nothing but iron and rusty brass, he closed them again, and delivered them safely to Tecla Georgis, there to be kept for that campaign.

DELIVERED now from the embarrassment of my baggage by the industry of Guebra Mehedin, and of my cases and boxes by my own inclination, we set out with Netcho to take up our quarters with Negadè Ras Mahomet at Dara, where we arrived in the afternoon, having picked up one of our mules in the way, with a couple of carpets and some kitchen furniture upon it, all the rest being carried off.

THE object which now first presented itself, and called our attention, was Strates in a night-cap, in other respects perfectly

ly

ly naked, with a long gun upon his shoulder, without powder or shot, but prancing and capering about in a great passion, and swearing a number of Greek oaths, which nobody there understood a word of but myself. This spectacle was rather diverting for some minutes; at last Netcho, though I believe he was not over-well provided, gave him an upper cloak to wrap round him. It was not then warm, indeed, but it was not very cold. After recovering the mule, he got on between the panniers, and I advised him to put the smallest carpet about him, which he soon after did; he had not yet spoke a word to me from fullness.

"STRATES, said I, my good friend, lay aside that long gun, for you will fall and break it, besides, it hath not been charged since it was fired at Guebra Mehedin. If you carry it to strike terror, it is altogether unnecessary; for, if we had dressed you as you are now accoutred, when we sent you forward with the baggage to Dara, there is not a thief in all Begemder would have ventured to come near you." He looked at me with a countenance full of anger and contempt, though he said nothing; but, in Greek, pronounced anathemas against the father of Guebra Mehedin, according to the Greek form of cursing. "Curse himself and his brother, said I, and not his father, for he has been dead these twenty years."—"I will curse whom I please, says he, in a great passion, I curse his father, himself, and his brother, the Ras, and the king, and everybody that has brought me into such a scrape as I have been to-day. I have been stripped naked, and within an inch of having my throat cut, besides being gelded; and well may you laugh now at the figure I make. If you had seen those damned crooked knives, with their black hands, all begging, as if it

had been for charity, to be allowed to do my business, you would have been glad for my making no worse figure to-night than I do with this carpet upon my head."

"My dear Strates, said I, it is the fortune of war, and many princes and great men, who, at this moment I am speaking to you, live in the enjoyment of every thing they can desire, before a month expires, perhaps, will be stretched on the cold ground, a prey to the birds and wild beasts of the field, without so much as a carpet to cover them such as you have. You as yet are only frightened; though, it is true, a man may be as well killed as frightened to death."

"Sir, says he, in a violent rage, that I deny, it is not the same? a man that is killed feels no more; but he that is frightened to death, *as I have been to-day*, suffers ten thousand times more than if he had been killed outright."—

"Well, said I, Strates, I will not dispute with you; I believe they suffer much the same after they are dead; but you, I thank God, have only lost your cloaths, and you are now most comfortably, though not ornamentally, wrapped up in my carpet; as soon as we get to Dara, you shall be dressed from head to foot, by Negadé Ras Mahomet, at the expence of the king, in better cloaths than you ever wore in your life, at least since I knew you; only give me your gun till your passion is allayed; you know it is a valuable one which I never quit."

He then gave me the gun fullenly enough; and I continued, "I will this very night present you with one of the handsomest Turkish fashies that Mahomet has to sell. I saw him in the king's house, with many new ones that he had procured, a little before I went to Emfras." I cannot pretend:

tend to say whether his visage cleared up, for he was still perfectly hid with the carpet, as it began to grow cool as well as dark ; but the sight of the lights in the houses of Dara, and the promise of the new cloaths and the fash, had very much softened his voice and expressions.

“ Sir, says he, bringing his mule close up to mine, now, *you are not in a passion*, one may speak to you. Do you not think that it is tempting Providence to come so far from your own country to seek these d—n’d weeds and flowers, at the risk of having your throat cut every hour of the day, and, what is *worse*, my throat cut too, and of being gelded into the bargain ? Are there no weeds, and bogs, and rivers in your own country ? what have you to do with that d—n’d Nile, where he rises, or whether he rises at all, or not ? What will all those trees and branches do for you when these horrid blacks have done your business, as they were near doing mine ? He then made a sign towards his girdle with his fingers, which made me understand what he meant—“ Nile, says he, curse upon his father’s head the day that he was born.”

“ STRATES, replied I gravely, he has no father, and was never born. *Fertur sine teste creatus*, says the poet.”—“ There’s your Latin again ; the poet is an ass and a blockhead, let him be who he will, continued Strates ; and I do maintain, whether you be angry or not, that at Stanchio and Scio there are finer trees than ever you saw, or will see in Abyssinia. There is a tree, says he, that fifty men like you, spreading all your hands round about, would not be able to grasp it. Nay, it is not a tree, it is but half a tree ; it is as old, I believe, as Methuselah : Did you ever see it ?”—“ I tell you

you, friend Strates, said I, I never was at Scio in my life, and, therefore, could not see it."—"Nor at Stanchio?"—Yes, I have been at Stanchio, and have seen the large plane-tree there. I believe it may be about eighteen or twenty feet in circumference."—"Galen and Hippocrates lived," adds he, there together, 2000 years before our Saviour: Did you ever hear that?"—"I have read, said I, Strates, that, about 500 years before Christ, Hippocrates did live there; but Galen was not born till 200 years after Christ. I do not recollect if he was ever at Stanchio; but, surely, never lived there with Hippocrates.

STRATES was in the middle of a declaration, that those were all falsehoods of Latins and Papists; and we were ascending, composedly enough, through a narrow, rocky road, thick-covered with high trees and bushes; when, just before our entrance into the village of Dara, a gun was fired, and the ball distinctly heard passing through the leaves among the branches. This occasioned a great alarm to our disputant, who immediately supposed that Guebra Mehedin, and all his robbers, were there expressly waiting for us; nor was he the only person that felt uneasily. Netcho, myself, and the generality of his officers, thought this was more than probable; we all therefore dismounted, loaded our fire-arms, halted till all our stragglers came up, and consulted what we were to do.

STRATES, though tired and naked, found it was better to go back under his carpet, and, if possible, overtake Ayto Adigo, than take possession of his new cloaths from Negadé Ras Mahomet, with the risk of meeting Guebra Mehedin there. In vain I remonstrated to him, that he, of all

others, had nothing to lose but Netcho's old cloak and the carpet. His fears, however, made him think otherwise, nor could he banish his apprehensions of the crooked knives, and, what he called, *the operation*. Netcho having ordered and conversed with his men in his own language, which I did not understand, said after, with great composure and firm tone of voice, That he had come to lodge in the market-place of Dara that night, and would not be put out of his quarters by boys of the character of Mehedin and Confu; that, in his present circumstances, with the few troops he had, he did not seek to fight, but even with this force, such as it was, if attacked, he would not decline it.—Whatever country, or whatever distance of time and place heroes live at, their hearts are always in unison, and speak the same language on similar and great occasions. There old Netcho, without having ever heard of Shakespeare, repeated the very words that, 300 years ago, our great king Henry V, did before the battle of Agincourt:—

The sum of all my answer is but this;  
 We would not seek a battle as we are;  
 Yet, as we are, we say we will not shun it.  
 So tell your master——

SHAKESPEARE.

We had not advanced but a few paces, before two of the town came to us; the noise of our approach had been heard, and all the dogs had been barking for half an hour. Soon after, arrived a son of Negadé Ras Mahomet, who assured us all was in peace; that they had been expecting us and Ayto Adigo with us; that he heard nothing of Guebra-Mchedin, only that he had retreated with great precipitation homewards.



homewards across the plain, as they apprehended, from fear of the approach of our party. He had, indeed, for some days, been guilty of great irregularities; had slain two men, and wounded the son of Mahomet, the Shum, or chief of Alata, in attempting to take from him the revenue due from that territory to the king; after which they had been beat back by Mahomet without their booty, and nothing more was known of them.

THIS brought us to Negadè Ras Mahomet's house, who killed a cow for Netcho, or rather allowed him to kill one for himself; for it is equal to a renunciation of Christianity to eat meat when the beast is slaughtered by a Mahometan. Strates, who from his infancy, in his own country, had fared on nothing else, was not so scrupulous, though he concealed it; he therefore had a very hearty supper privately with Negadé Ras Mahomet and his family, who very willingly promised to get his new cloaths ready by the next morning.

As I was myself, however, full of thoughts upon the difficulties and dangers I was already engaged in, and of the prospect of still greater before me, I had no stomach for either of their suppers, but ordered some coffee, and went to bed. After I lay down I desired Negadè Ras Mahomet to come to me, and, when we were alone, I interrogated him if he knew any thing of the rebellion in Begemder. At first he declared he did not; he laughed at the notion of Guebra Mehedin and Confu being Fit-Auraris to Gusho and Powussen, and said, that either of these generals would hang them the first time they came into their hands. He told me, however, that Woodage Afahel had been assembling

bling troops, and had committed some cruelties upon the king's servants in Maitsha; but this, he imagined, was at the instigation of Fasil, for he never was known to have been connected either with Powussen or Gusso. He told me after, under the seal of secrecy, that Ras Michael had halted two days at Derdera; that, upon a message he had received from Begemder, he had broke out into violent passions against Gusso and Powussen, calling them liars and traitors, in the openest manner; that a council had been held at Derdera, in presence of the king, where it was in deliberation whether the army should not turn short into Begemder, to force that province to join them; but that it was carried, for the sake of the Agows, to send Powussen a summons to join him for the last time: that, in the mean while, they should march straight with the greatest diligence to meet Fasil, and give him battle, then return, and reduce to proper subordination both Begemder and Amhara.

THIS was the very worst news I could possibly receive according to the resolutions that I had then taken, for I was within about fourteen miles of the great cataract, and it was probable I never again should be so near, were it even always accessible; to pass, therefore, without seeing it, was worse, in my own thoughts, than any danger that could threaten me.

NEGADE RAS MAHOMET was a sober plain man, of excellent understanding, and universal good character for truth and integrity; and, as such, very much in the favour both of the King and Ras Michael. I therefore opened my intentions to him without reserve, desiring his advice how to

manage this excursion to the cataract. " Unless you had told me you was resolved, says he, with a grave air, though full of openness and candour, I would, in the first place, have advised you not to think of such an undertaking ; these are unsettled times ; all the country is bushy, wild, and uninhabited, quite to Alata ; and though Mahomet, the Shum, is a good man, my friend and relation, and the king reposes trust in him, as he does in me, yet Alata itself is at any time but a bad, straggling place, there are now many strangers, and wild people there, whom Mahomet has brought to his assistance, since Guebra Mehedin made the attack upon him. If, then, any thing was to befall you, what should I answer to the king and the Iteghè ? it would be said, the Turk has betrayed him ; though, God knows, I was never capable of betraying your dog, and rather would be poor all my life, than the richest man of the province by doing the like wrong, even if the bad action was never to be revealed, or known, unless to my own heart.

" MAHOMET, said I, you need not dwell on these professions ; I have lived twelve years with people of your religion, my life always in their power, and I am now in your house, in preference to being in a tent out of doors with Netcho and his Christians. I do not ask you whether I am to go or not, for that is resolved on ; and, tho' you are a Mahometan, and I a Christian, no religion teaches a man to do evil. We both agree in this, that God, who has protected me thus far, is capable to protect me likewise at the cataract, and farther, if he has not determined otherwise, for my good ; I only ask you as a man who knows the country, to give me your best advice, how I may satisfy my curiosity in this point, with as little danger, and as much expedition as possible,

possible, leaving the rest to heaven.”—“ Well, says he, I shall do so. I think, likewise, for your comfort, that, barring unforeseen accidents, you may do it at this time, without great danger. Guebra Mehedin will not come between this town and Alata, because we are all one people, and the killing two men, and wounding Mahomet’s son, makes him a *dimmenia*\*. At Alata he knows the Shum is ready to receive him as he deserves, and he is himself afraid of Kasmati Ayabdar, with whom he is as deep in guilt as with us, and here he well knows he dare not venture for many reasons.”

“ Ayabdar, said I, passed the Karoota three days ago.”

“ Well, well, replied Mahomet, so much the better. Ayabdar has the leprosy, and goes every year once, sometimes twice, to the hot wells at Lebec ; they must pass near one another, and that is the reason Guebra Mehedin has assembled all these banditti of horse about him. He is a beggar, and a spendthrift ; a fortnight ago he sent to me to borrow twenty ounces of gold. You may be sure I did not lend it him ; he is too much in my debt already ; and I hope Ras Michael will give you his head in your hand before winter, for the shameful action he has been guilty of to you and yours this day.

“ WOODAGE ASAMEL, said I, what say you of him ?”—

“ Why, you know, replied Mahomet, nobody can inform you about his motions, as he is perpetually on horseback, and never rests night nor day ; however, he has no business on this side of the water, the rather that he must be sure Ras Michael, when he passed here, took with him all the

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king’s

king's money that I had in my hands. When day-light is fairly come, for we do not know the changes a night may produce in this country, take half a dozen of your servants; I will send with you my son and four of my servants; you will call at Alata, go down and see the cataract, but do not stay, return immediately, and, *Ullab Kerim*, God is merciful."

I THANKED my kind landlord, and let him go; but recollecting, called him again, and asked, "What shall I do with Netcho? how shall I rejoin him? my company is too small to pass Maitsha without him."—"Sleep in peace, says he, I will provide for that. I tell you in confidence, the king's money is in my hands, and was not ready when the Ras passed; my son is but just arrived with the last of it this evening, tired to death; I send the money by Netcho, and my son too, with forty stout fellows well armed, who will die in your service, and not run away like those vagabond Christians, in whom you must place no confidence if danger presents itself, but immediately throw yourself among the Mahometans. Besides, there are about fifty foldiers, most of them from Tigré, Michael's men, that have been loitering here these two days. It was one of these that fired the gun just before you came, which alarmed Netcho; so that, when you are come back in safety from the cataract, they shall be, by that time, all on their march to the passage. My son shall mount with you; I fear the Nile will be too deep, but when once you are at Tfoomwa, you may set your mind at rest, and bid defiance to Woodage Afahel, who knows his enemy always before he engages him, and at this time will not venture to interrupt your march."

As I have mentioned the name of this person so often, it will be necessary to take notice, that he was by origin a Galla, but born in Damot, of the clan Elmana, or Densa, two tribes settled there in the time of Yafous I. that he was the most intrepid and active partizan in his time, and had an invincible hatred to Ras Michael, nor was there any love lost betwixt them. It is impossible to conceive with what velocity he moved, sometimes with 200 horse, sometimes with half that number. He was constantly falling upon some part of Michael's army, whether marching or encamped; the blow once struck, he disappeared in a minute. When he wanted to attempt something great, he had only to summon his friends and acquaintance in the country, and he had then a little army, which dispersed as soon as the business was done. It was Ras Michael's first question to the spies; Where was Woodage Afahel last night? a question they very seldom could answer with certainty. He was in his person too tall for a good horseman, yet he was expert in this qualification by constant practice. His face was yellow, as if he had the jaundice, and much pitted with the small-pox; his eyes glaring, but fiery; his nose as it were broken, his mouth large, his chin long and turned up at the end; he spoke very fast, but not much, and had a very shy, but ill-designing look. In his character, he was avaricious, treacherous, inexorable, and cruel to a proverb; in short, he was allowed to be the most merciless robber and murderer that age had produced in all Abyssinia.

WEARIED with thinking, and better reconciled to my expatriation, I fell into a sound sleep. I was awakened by Strates in the morning (the 21st of May) who, from the next room, had heard all the conversation between me and Negadé Raz, and

and began now to think there was no safety but in the camp of the king. I will not repeat his wife expostulations against going to the cataract. We were rather late, and I paid little regard to them. After coffee, I mounted my horse, with five servants on horseback, all resolute, active, young fellows, armed with lances in the fashion of their country. I was joined that moment by a son of Mahomet, on a good horse, armed with a short gun, and pistols at his belt, with four of his servants, Mahometans, stout men, each having his gun, and pistols at his girdle, and a sword hung over his shoulder, mounted upon four good mules, swifter and stronger than ordinary horses. We galloped all the way, and were out of sight in a short time. We then pursued our journey with diligence, but not in a hurry; we went first to a hilly and rocky country, full of trees, mostly of unknown kinds, and all of the greatest beauty possible, having flowers of a hundred different colours and forms upon them, many of the trees were loaded with fruit, and many with both fruit and flowers. I was truly sorry to be obliged to pass them without more distinct notice; but we had no time, as the distance to the cataract was not absolutely certain, and the cataract then was our only object.

AFTER passing the plain, we came to a brisk stream which rises in Begemder, passes Alata, and throws itself into the Nile below the cataract. They told me it was called Mariam Ohha; and, a little farther, on the side of a green hill, having the rock appearing in some parts of it, stands Alata, a considerable village, with several smaller, to the south and west. Mahomet, our guide, rode immediately up to the house where he knew the governor, or Shum, resided, for fear of alarming him; but we had already been seen at a

considerable distance, and Mahomet and his servants known. All the people of the village surrounded the mules directly, paying each their compliments to the master and the servants; the same was immediately observed towards us; and, as I saluted the Shum in Arabic, his own language, we speedily became acquainted. Having overshot the cataract, the noise of which we had a long time distinctly heard, I resisted every entreaty that could be made to me to enter the house to refresh myself. I had imbibed part of Strates's fears about the unsettledness of the times, and all the kind invitations were to no purpose; I was, as it were, forced to comply to refresh our horses.

I HAPPENED to be upon a very steep part of the hill full of bushes; and one of the servants, dressed in the Arabian fashion, in a burnoose, and turban striped white and green, led my horse, for fear of his slipping, till it got into the path leading to the Shum's door. I heard the fellow exclaiming in Arabic, as he led the horse, "Good Lord! to see you here! Good God! to see you here!"—"I asked him who he was speaking of, and what reason he had to wonder to see me there."—"What! do you not know me!" "I said I did not."—"Why, replied he, I was several times with you at Jidda. I saw you often with Capt. Price and Capt. Scott, with the Moor Yafne, and Mahomet Gibberti. I was the man that brought your letters from Metical Aga at Mecca, and was to come over with you to Masuah, if you had gone directly there, and had not proceeded to Yemen or Arabia Felix. I was on board the Lion, with the Indian nokeda (so they call the captain of a country ship) when your little vessel, all covered with sail, passed with such briskness through the English ships, which all fired their cannon; and everybody said,

there



there is a poor man making great haste to be assassinated among those wild people in Habesh ; and so we all thought. He concluded, Drink ! no force ! Englishman ! very good ! G--d damn, drink !” We had just arrived, while my friend was uttering these exclamations, at the place where the Shum and the rest were standing. The man continued repeating the same words, crying as loud as he could, with an air of triumph, while I was reflecting how shameful it was for us to make these profligate expressions by frequent repetition, so easily acquired by strangers that knew nothing else of our language.

THE Shum, and all about him, were in equal astonishment at seeing the man, to all appearance, in a passion, bawling out words they did not understand ; but he, holding a horn in his hand, began louder than before, drink ! very good ! Englishman ! shaking the horn in the Shum his master’s face. Mahomet of Alata was a very grave, composed man ; “ I do declare, says he, Ali is become mad : Does anybody know what he says or means ? ” — “ That I do, said I, and will tell you by-and-bye ; he is an old acquaintance of mine, and is speaking English ; let us make a hasty meal, however, with any thing you have to give us.”

OUR horses were immediately fed ; bread, honey, and butter served : Ali had no occasion to cry, drink ; it went about plentifully, and I would stay no longer, but mounted my horse, thinking every minute that I tarried might be better spent at the cataract. The first thing they carried us to was the bridge, which consists of one arch of about twenty-five feet broad, the extremities of which were strongly let into, and rested on the solid rock on both sides ; but fragments

ments of the parapets remained, and the bridge itself seemed to bear the appearance of frequent repairs, and many attempts to ruin it; otherwise, in its construction, it was exceedingly commodious. The Nile here is confined between two rocks, and runs in a deep trough, with great roaring and impetuous velocity. We were told no crocodiles were ever seen so high, and were obliged to remount the stream above half a mile before we came to the cataract, through trees and bushes of the same beautiful and delightful appearance with those we had seen near Dara.

THE cataract itself was the most magnificent sight that ever I beheld. The height has been rather exaggerated. The missionaries say the fall is about sixteen ells, or fifty feet. The measuring is, indeed, very difficult, but, by the position of long sticks, and poles of different lengths, at different heights of the rock, from the water's edge, I may venture to say that it is nearer forty feet than any other measure. The river had been considerably increased by rains, and fell in one sheet of water, without any interval, above half an English mile in breadth, with a force and noise that was truly terrible, and which stunned and made me, for a time, perfectly dizzy. A thick fume, or haze, covered the fall all round, and hung over the course of the stream both above and below, marking its track, though the water was not seen. The river, though swelled with rain, preserved its natural clearness, and fell, as far as I could discern, into a deep pool, or basin, in the solid rock, which was full, and in twenty different eddies to the very foot of the precipice, the stream, when it fell, seeming part of it to run back with great fury upon the rock, as well as for-

ward in the line of its course, raising a wave, or violent ebullition, by chaffing against each other.

JEROME LOBO pretends, that he has sat under the curve, or arch, made by the projectile force of the water rushing over the precipice. He says he sat calmly at the foot of it, and looking through the curve of the stream, as it was falling, saw a number of rainbows of inconceivable beauty in this extraordinary prism. This however I, without hesitation, aver to be a downright falsehood. A deep pool of water, as I mentioned, reaches to the very foot of the rock, and is in perpetual agitation. Now, allowing that there was a seat, or bench, which there is not, in the middle of the pool, I do believe it absolutely impossible, by any exertion of human strength, to have arrived at it. Although a very robust man, in the prime and vigour of life, and a hardy, practised, indefatigable swimmer, I am perfectly confident I could not have got to that seat from the shore through the quietest part of that basin. And, supposing the friar placed in his imaginary seat under the curve of that immense arch of water, he must have had a portion of firmness, more than falls to the share of ordinary men, and which is not likely to be acquired in a monastic life, to philosophise upon optics in such a situation, where every thing would seem to his dazzled eyes to be in motion, and the stream, in a noise like the loudest thunder, to make the solid rock (at least as to sense) shake to its very foundation, and threaten to tear every nerve to pieces, and to deprive one of other senses besides that of hearing. It was a most magnificent sight, that ages, added to the greatest length of human life, would not deface or eradicate from my memory; it struck me with a kind of stupor, and a total oblivion of where I was, and of

every other sublunary concern. It was one of the most magnificent, stupendous fights in the creation, though degraded and vilified by the lies of a groveling, fanatic peasant.

I WAS awakened from one of the most profound reveries that ever I fell into, by Mahomet, and by my friend *Drink*, who now put to me a thousand impertinent questions. It was after this I measured the fall, and believe, within a few feet, it was the height I have mentioned; but I confess I could at no time in my life less promise upon precision; my reflection was suspended, or subdued, and while in sight of the fall I think I was under a temporary alienation of mind; it seemed to me as if one element had broke loose from, and become superior to all laws of subordination; that the fountains of the great deep were extraordinarily opened, and the destruction of a world was again begun by the agency of water.

It was now half an hour past one o'clock, the weather perfectly good; it had rained very little that day, but threatened a showery evening; I peremptorily refused returning back to Alata, which our landlord importuned us to. He gave us a reason that he thought would have weight with us, that he, too, had his meery, or money, to send to the king, which would be ready the next morning as early as we pleased. The mention of to-morrow morning brought all my engagements and their consequences into my mind, and made me give a flat refusal, with some degree of peevishness and ill-humour. I had soon after found, that he had otherwise made up this affair with Mahomet our guide; but being resolute, and, a moment after, taking leave of

our kind Shum, we were joined by Seide his eldest son, and our *English friend Drink*, each upon a mule, with two servants on foot, his father, as he said, being unwilling to spare more people, as the whole inhabitants of Alata, their neighbours and friends, intended soon to surprise Guebra Mehedin, if a feasible opportunity offered.

THOUGH we went briskly, it was past five before we arrived at Dara. Netcho had not stirred, and had procured another cow from Mahomet, of which all the strangers, and soldiers who remained, partook. Mahomet, I believe, out of kindness to me, had convinced them of the necessity of taking along with them the Shum of Alata's money; and Netcho well knew that those who brought any part of the revenue to Ras Michael were always received kindly; and he was not interested enough in the cause to make more haste than necessary to join the king.

STRATES was completely clothed, and received his fash upon my arrival. He feigned to be wonderfully hurt at my having left him behind in my excursion to the cataract. At supper I began to question him, for the first time, what had happened to him with Guebra Mehedin. "Sure, Strates," said I, "you two were once friends; I have dined with you together many a time at Ayto Engedan's, and often seen you with him in Gondar."—"Gondar! says he, I have known him these fourteen years, when he was a child in his father Basba Eusebius's house; he was always playing amongst us at his uncle Kasmati Eshté's; he was just one of us; nay, he is not now twenty-six.

STRATES proceeded—"We were crossing the plain below Dara, and not being inclined to go into the town without you, we made to a large daroo-tree, and sat down to rest ourselves till you should come up. As the ground was somewhat elevated, we saw several horses in the bed of a torrent where there was no water running, and, when these were pulled up the bank, their masters got immediately upon them. I conceived the one with the red sash upon his head was Guebra Mehedin, and presently eight or ten naked people, armed with lances and shields, came out of the hole nearest me. I was surprised, and thought they might be robbers, and, kneeling down upon one knee, I presented the large blunderbuss at them. On this they all ran back to their hole, and fell flat on their faces; and they did well; I should have given them a confounded peppering."—"Certainly, said I, there is little doubt of that."—"You may laugh, continued Strates, but the first thing I saw near me was Confu and Guebra Mehedin, the one with a red, the other a kind of white fillet tied round his forehead. O ho! friend, says Guebra Mehedin, where are you going? and held out his hand to me as kindly, familiarly, and cheerfully as possible. I immediately laid down my blunderbuss, and went to kiss his hand. You know they are the good old queen's nephews; and I thought if their house was near we should have good entertainment, and some merriment that night. I then saw one of their servants lift the blunderbuss from the ground, but apparently with fear, and the rest took possession of the mules and baggage. I began to ask Guebra Mehedin what this meant? and said accidentally, *ente you!* instead of speaking it *entow*, as you know they pronounce it to great people. Without further provocation he gave me a lash with his whip.

whip across the eyes, another behind took hold of your sword that was slung upon my shoulders, and would have strangled me with the cord if I had not fallen backwards ; they all began then to strip me. I was naked in a minute as I was the hour I was born, having only this night-cap ; when one of them, a tall black fellow, drew a crooked knife, and proposed to pay me a compliment that has made me shudder every time I have since thought of it. I don't know what would have been the end of it, if Confu had not said, Poh ! he is a *white* man, and not worth the *scarifying* : Let us seek his master, says Guebra Mehedin, he will by this have passed the Gomara ; he has always plenty of gold both from the king and Iteghé, and is a real Frank, on which account it would be a sin to spare him. On this away they went skirmishing about the plain. Horsemen came to join them from all parts, and every one that passed me gave me a blow of some kind or other. None of them hurt me very much, but, no matter ; I may have my turn : we shall see what figure he will make before the Iteghé some of these days, or, what is better, before Ras Michael."

" THAT you shall never see, says Negadé Ras Mahomet, who entered the room in the instant, for there is a man now without who informs us that Guebra Mehedin is either dead or just a-dying. A shot fired at him, by one of you at the Gomara, cut off part of his cheek-bone ; the next morning he heard that Kasmati Ayabdar was going to the hot waters at Lebec with servants only, and the devil to whom he belonged would not quit him ; he would persist, ill as he was, to attack Ayabdar, who having, unknown to him, brought a number of stout fellows along with him, without difficulty cut his servants to pieces. In the fray, Tecla Georgis, a servant

vant who takes care of Ayabdar's horse, coming up with Guebra Mehedin himself, hurt as he was, struck him over the skull with a large crooked knife like a hatchet, and left him mortally wounded on the field, whence he was carried to a church, where he is now lying a miserable spectacle, and can never recover." Strates could hold no longer. He got up and danced as if he had been frantic, sometimes singing Greek songs, at another time pronouncing ten thousand curses, which he wished might overtake him in the other world. For my part, I felt very differently, for I had much rather, considering whose nephew he was, that he should have lived, than to have it said that he received his first wound, not a mortal one, but intended as such, from my hand.

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## CHAP. V.

*Pass the Nile and encamp at Tfoomwa—Arrive at Derdera—Alarm on approaching the Army—Join the King at Karcagna.*

ON the 22d of May we were all equally desirous to resume our journey. We set out accordingly at six o'clock in the morning, ascending some hills covered, as the former ones, with trees and shrubs, utterly unknown to me, but of inexpressible beauty, and many of extraordinary fragrance. We continued ascending about three miles, till we came to the top of the ridge within sight of the lake. As we rose, the hills became more bare and less beautiful. We afterwards descended towards the passage, partly over steep banks which had been covered with bushes, all trodden down by the army, and which had made the access to the river exceedingly slippery. Here we saw the use of Mahomet's servants, three of whom, each with a lance in one hand, holding that of his companion in the other, waded across the violent stream, founding with the end of their lances every step

step they took. The river was very deep, the current, I suppose, fifty yards broader than it was at the cataract; but the banks were, for a great way on each side, almost perfectly level, though much obstructed with black stones. In the middle it was very deep, and the stream smooth, so that it was apparent our horses must swim. For my part I did not like the smooth stones at the bottom, as a fall there would have been irrecoverable; and my horse was shod with iron, which is not usual in Abyssinia. I therefore resolved to swim where I could not wade, and, wrapping my cloaths in a bundle, I gave them to a servant, who carried them over on his head. I then waded in, and found the water unexpectedly cold. Mahomet rode on a mule by my side, sometimes swimming, sometimes walking. I attempted to sound up towards the lake, and found it deeper there. I returned, therefore, being unwilling to try experiments, and, committing myself to the stream, swam to the other side, much comforted by the assurance that no crocodile passed the cataract.

The beasts having got over, the men followed much quicker; many women, going to join the army, swam over, holding the tails of the horses, and we were all on the other side before twelve o'clock, the beasts a good deal tired with the passage, the steepness of the access to it, and the still greater depth on the other side. For my part, I thought we could not have gone on to Tfoomwa, but it was carried against me. Tfoomwa is about twelve miles distant; and I suppose it was not much past three o'clock when we arrived there, which was very fortunate, as we had scarcely pitched our tents before a most terrible storm of rain, wind, and thunder overtook us. My tent was happily placed in one

respect, being on a flat on the lee-side of a hill, and sheltered from the storm; but, on the other hand, the water ran so plentifully from above as quite to overflow it on the inside till a trench was dug to carry it off.

RAS MICHAEL had burnt nothing at Tfoomwa, though there was a house of Powuffen's in the place, built by his father. But that dissembler, to prevent the worst, and carry on the farce to the uttermost, had sent many bags of flour for the use of the King and the Ras, which were to be distributed to the army in case they wanted.

FROM the passage to Tfoomwa, all the country was forsaken; the houses uninhabited, the grass trodden down, and the fields without cattle. Every thing that had life and strength fled before that terrible leader, and his no less terrible army; a profound silence was in the fields around us, but no marks as yet of desolation. We kept strict watch in this solitude all that night. I took my turn till twelve, as I was the least fatigued of any. Netcho had picquets about a quarter of a mile on every side of us, with fire-arms to give the alarm.

ON the 23d, about three in the morning, a gun was heard on the side towards the passage. This did not much alarm us, though we all turned out. In a few minutes came Ayto Adigo, (not the Shum of Karoota, already mentioned, who left us at the Gomara,) but a young nobleman of Begemder of great hopes, one of the gentlemen of the king's bed-chamber, and consequently my colleague. He intended to have brought four horses to the king, one of which he had drowned, or rather, as I afterwards understood, throttled in  
passing

passing the Nile at the mouth of the lake ; and two men, the king's servants, had perished there likewise. He came in great hurry, full of the news from Begemder, and of the particulars of the conspiracy, such as have been already stated. With Ayto Adigo came the king's cook, Sebastos, an old Greek, near seventy, who had fallen sick with fatigue. After having satisfied his inquiries, and given him what refreshment we could spare, he left Sebastos with us, and pursued his journey to the camp.

On the 24th, at our ordinary time, when the sun began to be hot, we continued our route due south, through a very plain, flat country, which, by the constant rains that now fell, began to stand in large pools, and threatened to turn all into a lake. We had hitherto lost none of our beasts of carriage, but we now were so impeded by streams, brooks, and quagmires, that we despaired of ever bringing one of them to join the camp. The horses, and beasts of burthen that carried the baggage of the army, and which had passed before us, had spoiled every ford, and we saw to-day a number of dead mules lying about the fields, the houses all reduced to ruins, and smoking like so many kilns; even the grass, or wild oats, which were grown very high, were burnt in large plots of a hundred acres together; every thing bore the marks that Ras Michael was gone before, whilst not a living creature appeared in those extensive, fruitful, and once well-inhabited plains. An awful silence reigned everywhere around, interrupted only at times by thunder, now become daily, and the rolling of torrents produced by local showers in the hills, which ceased with the rain, and were but the children of an hour. Amidst this universal silence that prevailed all over this scene of extensive desolation, I could not

help remembering how finely Mr Gray paints the passage of such an army, under a leader like Ras Michael—

Confusion in his van with flight combin'd,  
And Sorrow's faded form, and Solitude behind.

AT Derdera we saw the church of St Michael, the only building which, in favour of his own name, the Ras had spared. It served us then for a very convenient lodging, as much rain had fallen in the night, and the priests had all fled or been murdered. We had this evening, when it was clear, seen the mountain of Samseen. Our next stage from Derdera was Karcagna, a small village near the banks of the Jemma, about two miles from Samseen. We knew the king had resolved to burn it, and we expected to have seen the clouds of smoke arising from its ruins, but all was perfectly cool and clear, and this very much surprised us, considering the time he had to do this, and the great punctuality and expedition with which his army used to execute orders of this kind. As we advanced, we had seen a great number of dead mules and horses, and the hyænas so bold as only to leave the carcase for a moment, and snarl as if they had regretted at seeing any of us pass alive.

SINCE passing the Nile I found myself more than ordinarily depressed; my spirits were sunk almost to a degree of despondency, and yet nothing had happened since that period more than was expected before. This disagreeable situation of mind continued at night while I was in bed. The rashness and imprudence with which I had engaged myself in so many dangers without any necessity for so doing; the little prospect of my being ever able to extricate myself.

myself out of them, or, even if I lost my life, of the account being conveyed to my friends at home; the great and unreasonable presumption which had led me to think that, after every one that had attempted this voyage had miscarried in it, I was the only person that was to succeed; all these reflections upon my mind, when relaxed, dozing, and half oppressed with sleep, filled my imagination with what I have heard other people call the *horrors*, the most disagreeable sensation I ever was conscious of, and which I then felt for the first time. Impatient of suffering any longer, I leaped out of bed, and went to the door of the tent, where the outward air perfectly awakened me, and restored my strength and courage. All was still, and at a distance I saw several bright fires, but lower down, and more to the right than I expected, which made me think I was mistaken in the situation of Karcagna. It was then near four in the morning of the 25th. I called up my companions, happily buried in deep sleep, as I was desirous, if possible, to join the king that day. We accordingly were three or four miles from Derdera when the sun rose; there had been little rain that night, and we found very few torrents on our way; but it was slippery, and uneasy walking, the rich soil being trodden into a consistence like paste.

ABOUT seven o'clock we entered upon the broad plain of Maitsha, and were fast leaving the lake. Here the country is, at least a great part of it, in tillage, and had been, in appearance, covered with plentiful crops, but all was cut down by the army for their horses, or trodden under foot, from carelessness or vengeance, so that a green blade could scarcely be seen. We saw a number of people this day, chiefly straggling soldiers, who, in parties of threes and fours, had  
been.

been seeking, in all the bushes and concealed parts of the river, for the miserable natives, who had hid themselves thereabouts ; in this they had many of them been successful. They had some of them three, some of them four women, boys and girls, who, though Christians like themselves, they nevertheless were carrying away into slavery to sell them to the Turks for a very small price.

A LITTLE before nine we heard a gun fired that gave us some joy, as the army seemed not to be far off ; a few minutes after, we heard several dropping shots, and, in less than a quarter of an hour's time, a general firing began from right to left, which ceased for an instant, and then was heard again as smart as ever, about the occasion of which we were divided in opinion.

NETCHO was satisfied that Woodage Afahel, from Samseen, had fallen upon Ras Michael at Karcagna, to prevent his burning it, and that Fasil had strongly reinforced him that he might be able to retard the army's march. On the other hand, having been informed by Ayto Adigo, that news were come to Gondar that Fasil had left Buré, and that Derdera was the place agreed on by Gusfo and Powullen to shut up Michael on the rear, I thought that it was Fasil, to make good his part of his promise, who had crossed the Nile at Goutto, and attacked Ras Michael before he suffered him to burn Samseen. Indeed we all agreed that both opinions were likely to be true, and that Fasil and Woodage Afahel would both attack the king at the same time. The firing continued much in the same way, rather slack, but apparently advancing nearer us ; a sure sign that our army was beaten and retreating. We, therefore, made ourselves

ready, and mounted on horseback, that we might join them. Yet it was a thing appeared to us scarcely possible, that Fafil should beat Ras Michael so easily, and with so short a resistance.

We had not gone far in the plain before we had a fight of the enemy, to our very great surprize and no small comfort. A multitude of deer, buffaloes, boars, and various other wild beasts, had been alarmed by the noise and daily advancing of the army, and gradually driven before them. The country was all overgrown with wild oats, a great many of the villages having been burnt the year before the inhabitants had abandoned them; in this shelter the wild beasts had taken up their abodes in very great numbers. When the army pointed towards Karcagna to the left, the silence and solitude on the opposite side made them turn to the right to where the Nile makes a semi-circle, the Jemma being behind them, and much overflowed. When the army, therefore, instead of marching south and by east towards Samseen, had turned their course north-west, their faces towards Gondar, they had fallen in with these innumerable herds of deer and other beasts, who, confined between the Nile, the Jemma, and the lake, had no way to return but that by which they had come. These animals, finding men in every direction in which they attempted to pass, became desperate with fear, and, not knowing what course to take, fell a prey to the troops. The soldiers, happy in an occasion of procuring animal food, presently fell to firing wherever the beasts appeared; every loaded gun was discharged upon them, and this continued for very near an hour. A numerous flock of the largest deer met us just in the face, and seemed so desperate, that they had every appearance



appearance of running us down ; and part of them forced themselves through, regardless of us all, whilst others turned south to escape across the plain.

THE king and Ras Michael were in the most violent agitation of mind : though the cause was before their eyes, yet the word went about that Woodage Afahel had attacked the army ; and this occasioned a great panic and disorder, for everybody was convinced with reason that he was not far off. The firing, however, continued, the balls flew about in every direction, some few were killed, and many people and horses were hurt ; still they fired, and Ras Michael, at the door of his tent, crying, threatening, and tearing his grey locks, found, for a few minutes, the army was not under his command. At this instant, Kasmati Netcho, whose Fit-Auraris had fallen back on his front, ordered his kettle-drums, to be beat before he arrived in the king's presence ; and this being heard, without it being known generally who we were, occasioned another panic ; great part of the army believed that Powuffen and Gushe were now at hand to keep their appointment with Fafil, and that Netcho and I were his Fit-Auraris. The king ordered his tent to be pitched, his standard to be set up, his drums to beat, (the signal for encamping) and the firing immediately ceased. But it was a long while before all the army could believe that Woodage Afahel had not been engaged with some part of it that day. Happily, if near at hand, he did not lay hold of this favourable opportunity ; for I am convinced, if, just before our arrival, he had attacked Michael on the Samseen side, with 500 horse, our whole army had fled without resistance, and dispersed all over the country.

HERE I left Kasmati Netcho, and was making my way towards the king's tent, when I was met by a servant of confidence of Kessa Yafous, who had that day commanded the rear in the retreat, a very experienced officer, brave even to a fault, but full of mildness and humanity, and the most sensible and affable man in the army. He sent to desire that I would come to him alone, or that I would send one of the Greeks that followed me. I promised to do so, after having answered most of the questions that he bade his servant ask of me. After this I searched for Strates and Sebastos, who had been sick upon the road.

I soon came up with them, and was more surprised than I had been for several days, to see them both lie extended on the ground; Strates bleeding at a large wound in his forehead, speaking Greek to himself, and crying out his leg was broken, whilst he pressed it with both his hands below the knee, seemingly regardless of the gash in his head, which appeared to me a very ugly one, so that I, of course, thought his leg was still worse. Sebastos was lying stretched along the ground, scarcely saying any thing, but sighing loudly. Upon my asking him whether his arm was broken? he answered feebly, that he was a dying man, and that his legs, his arms, and his ribs were broken to pieces. I could not for my life conceive how this calamity had happened so suddenly, for I had not been half an hour absent talking to Kessa Yafous's servant; and, what seemed to me still stranger, every body around them were bursting out into fits of laughter.

ALI MAHOMET's servant, who was the only person that I saw concerned, upon my asking, told me that it was all owing

ing to prince George, who had frightened their mules. I have already hinted that this prince was fond of horsemanship, and rode with saddle, bridle, and stirrups, like an Arab; and, though young, was become an excellent horseman, superior to any in Abyssinia. The manner that two Arabs salute one another, when they meet, is, the person inferior in rank, or age, presents his gun at the other, about 500 yards distance, charged with powder only; he then, keeping his gun always presented, gallops these 500 yards as fast as he can, and, being arrived close, lowers the muzzle of his gun, and pours the explosion just under the other's stirrups, or horse's belly. This they do, sometimes twenty at a time, and you would often think it was impossible somebody should escape being bruised or burnt.

THE prince had learned this exercise from me, and was very perfect at the performance of it. We had procured him a short gun, with a lock and flint instead of a match, and he shot not only justly, but gracefully on horseback. He had been out after the deer all the morning; and hearing that I was arrived, and seeing the two Greeks riding on their mules, he came galloping furiously with his gun presented; and, not seeing me, he fired a shot under the belly of Strates's mule, upon the ground, and wheeling as quick as lightning to the left, regardless of the mischief he had occasioned, was out of sight in a moment, before he knew the consequences.

NEVER was compliment worse timed or relished. Strates had two panniers upon his mule, containing two great earthen jars of hydromel for the king; Sebastos had also some jars and pots, and three or four dozen of drinking-glasses,

glasses, likewise for the king ; each of the mules was covered with a carpet, and also the panniers ; and upon the pack-saddle, between these panniers, did Strates and Sebastos ride. The mules as well as the loading belonged to the king, and they only were permitted to ride them because they were sick. Strates went first, and, to save trouble, the halter of Sebastos's mule was tied to Strates's saddle, so the mules were fastened to and followed one another. Upon firing the gun so near it, Strates's mule, not used to compliments of this kind, started, and threw him to the ground ; it then trampled upon him, began to run off, and wound the halter around Sebastos behind, who fell to the ground likewise amongst some stones. Both the mules then began kicking at each other, till they had thrown off the panniers and pack-saddles, and broke every thing that was brittle in them. The mischief did not end here, for, in struggling to get loose, they fell foul of the mule of old Azage Tecla Haimanout, one of the king's criminal judges, a very old, feeble man, and threw him upon the ground, and broke his foot, so that he could not walk alone for several months afterwards. As soon as I had pitched a tent for the wounded, and likewise dressed Tecla Haimanout's foot, I went to Kefla Yafous, while the two Mahomets proceeded to the Ras with their money.

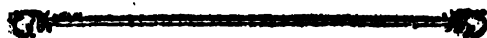
THE moment I came into the tent, Kefla Yafous rose up and embraced me. He was sitting alone, but with rather a cheerful than a dejected countenance ; he told me they were all in great concern, till Ayto Adigo's arrival, at a report which came from Gondar that we had fought with Guebra Mehedin, and had all been slain. I informed him every thing I knew, or had heard, but he had better intel-

ligence than I in every article but this last, fresh news having arrived the night before by way of Delakus. He said, the rebellion of Gusho and Powussen was certain; that the King and Ras knew every circumstance of it, and that Court-ohha was the place appointed with Fasil to meet and cut them off; he had not heard of Woodage Afahel's march, but seemed to give full credit to it; he said it was certain, likewise, that Fasil had advanced towards Maitsha; but where his quarters were he did not know, probably they were not at a great distance. He complained violently of his march, and of the number of beasts which they had lost; he wished also that Fasil would be induced to give battle where they were encamped, as his horse would probably be of little use to him among so many torrents and rivers, and must suffer considerably in their advancing hither.

I ASKED him whither they were now marching? He said, that, as soon as the news of the conspiracy were known, a council was held, where it was the general opinion they should proceed briskly forward, and attack Fasil alone at Buré, then turn to Gondar to meet the other two; but then they had it upon the very best authority that great rain had fallen to the southward; that the rivers, which were so frequent in that part of the country, were mostly impassable, so there would be great danger in meeting Fasil with an army spent and fatigued with the difficulty of the roads. It was, therefore, determined, and the Ras was decidedly of that opinion, that they should keep their army entire for a better day, and immediately cross the Nile, and march back to Gondar; that they had accordingly wheeled about, and that day was the first of their proceeding, which had been interrupted by the accident of the firing. Kessa Yafous offered

ferred me all sorts of refreshments, and I dined with him ; he sent also great abundance for my servants to my tent, lest I should not have yet got my appointments from the king. I then went directly to my own tent, where I found all that belonged to me had arrived safe, under the care of Francisco ; and having now procured clothes, instead of those taken from me by Guebra Mehedin, I waited upon the king, and staid a considerable time with him, asking much the same questions Kefla Yafous had done. I would have paid my respects to the Ras also, but missed him, for he was at council.





## CHAP. VI.

*King's Army retreats towards Gondar—Memorable Passage of the Nile—  
Dangerous Situation of the Army—Retreat of Kefla Yafous—Battle  
of Limjour—Unexpected Peace with Fasil—Arrival at Gondar.*

**I**T was on the 26th of May, early in the morning, that the army marched towards the Nile. In the afternoon we encamped, between two and three, on the banks of the river Coga, the church Abbo being something more than half a mile to the north-west of us.

NEXT morning, the 27th, we left the river Coga, marching down upon the Nile; we passed the church of *Mariam-Net*, as they call the church of St Anne. Here the superior, attended by about fifty of his monks, came in procession to welcome Ras Michael; but he, it seems, had received some intelligence of ill-offices the people of this quarter had done to the Agows by Fasil's direction; he therefore  
ordered

ordered the church to be plundered, and took the superior, and two of the leading men of the monks, away with him to Gondar; several of the others were killed and wounded, without provocation, by the soldiers, and the rest dispersed through the country.

PRINCE GEORGE had sent immediately in the morning to put me in mind that I had promised, in the king's tent at Lamgué, under Emfras, to ride with him in his party when in Maitsha. He commanded about two hundred and fifty chosen horse, and kept at about half a mile's distance on the right flank of the army. I told the king the prince's desire; who only answered, dryly enough, "Not till we pass the Nile; we do not yet know the state of this country." Immediately after this, he detached the horse of Siré and Serawé, and commanded me with his own guards to take possession of the ford where the Fit-Auraris had crossed, and to suffer no mule or horse to pass till their arrival.

THERE were two fords proposed for our passage; one opposite to the church Boskon Abbo, between the two rivers Kelti and Aroossi, (on the west of the Nile,) and the Koga and Amlac Ohha from the east; it was said to be deep, but passable, though the bottom was of clay, and very soft; the other ford proposed was higher up, at the second cataract of Kerr. It was thought of consequence to chuse this ford, as the Kelti, (itself a large and deep river) joined by the Branti, which comes from the westward of Quaquera, brings, in the rainy season, a prodigious accession of water to the Nile; yet, below this, the guides had advised the Ras to pass, and many found it afterwards a sound bottom, very little deeper, with level ground on both sides. We arrived about four on the bank



banks of the Nile, and took possession in a line of about 600 yards of ground.

FROM the time we decamped from Coga it poured incessantly the most continued rain we ever had yet seen, violent claps of thunder followed close one upon another, almost without interval, accompanied with sheets of lightning, which ran on the ground like water; the day was more than commonly dark, as in an eclipse; and every hollow, or foot-path, collected a quantity of rain, which fell into the Nile in torrents. It would have brought into the dullest mind Mr Hume's striking lines on my native Carron—

Red ran the river down, and loud and oft  
The angry spirit of the water shriek'd.

DOUGLAS.

THE Abyssinian armies pass the Nile at all seasons. It rolls with it no trees, stones, nor impediments; yet the sight of such a monstrous mass of water terrified me, and made me think the idea of crossing would be laid aside. It was plain in the face of every one, that they gave themselves over for lost; an universal dejection had taken place, and it was but too visible that the army was defeated by the weather, without having seen an enemy. The Greeks crowded around me, all forlorn and despairing, cursing the hour they had first entered that country, and following these curses with fervent prayers, where fear held the place of devotion. A cold and brisk gale now sprung up at N. W. with a clear sun; and soon after four, when the army arrived on the banks of the Nile, these temporary torrents were all subsided, the

fun was hot, and the ground again beginning to become dry.

NETCHO, Ras Michael's Fit-Auraris, with about 400 men, had passed in the morning, and taken his station above us in little huts like bee-hives, which the soldiers, who carry no tents, make very speedily and artificially for themselves, of the long, wild oats, each straw of which is at least eight feet long, and near as thick as an ordinary man's little finger. He had sent back word to the king, that his men had passed swimming, and with very great difficulty; that he doubted whether the horses, or loaded mules, could cross at any rate; but, if it was resolved to make the trial, they should do it immediately, without staying till the increase of the river. He said both banks were composed of black earth, slippery and miry, which would become more so when horses had puddled it; he advised, above all, the turning to the right immediately after coming ashore, in the direction in which he had fixed poles, as the earth there was hard and firm, besides having the advantage of some round stones which hindered the beasts from slipping or sinking. Instead, therefore, of resting there that night, it was resolved that the horse should cross immediately.

THE first who passed was a young man, a relation of the king, brother to Ayamico killed at the battle of Banja; he walked in with great caution, marking a track for the king to pass. He had gone upon rather solid ground, about twice the length of his horse, when he plunged out of his depth, and swam to the other side. The king followed him immediately with a great degree of haste, Ras Michael calling to him to proceed with caution, but without success.

Afterwards came the old Ras on his mule, with several of his friends swimming both with and without their horses on each side of him, in a manner truly wonderful. He seemed to have lost his accustomed calmness, and appeared a good deal agitated; forbade, upon pain of death, any one to follow him directly, or to swim over, as their custom is, holding their mules by the tail. As soon as these were safely ashore, the king's household and black troops, and I with them, advanced cautiously into the river, and swam happily over, in a deep stream of reddish-coloured water, which ran without violence almost upon a level.

EACH horseman had a mule in his hand, which swam after him, or by his side, with his coat of mail and head-piece tied upon it. My horse was a very strong one, and in good condition, and a servant took charge of my mule and coat of mail, so that, being unembarrassed, I had the happiness to get safe and soon over, and up the path to the right without great difficulty, so had most others of the cavalry who swam along with us; but the ground now began to be broken on both sides of the passage, and it was almost as difficult to get in, as it was to scramble up the bank afterwards.

*Quis cladem illius noctis, quis funera fando,  
Temperet a lachrymis.*—————

VIRG.

It is impossible to describe the confusion that followed; night was hard upon us, and, though it increased our loss, it in great measure concealed it; a thousand men had not yet passed, though on mules and horses; many mired in the muddy

muddy landing-place, fell back into the stream, and were carried away and drowned. Of the horse belonging to the king's household, one hundred and eighty in number, seven only were missing; with them Ayto Aylo, vice-chamberlain to the queen, and Tecla Mariam the king's uncle, a great friend of Ras Michael's, both old men.

THE ground on the west side was quite of another consistence than was that upon the east, it was firm, covered with short grass, and rose in small hills like the downs in England, all sloping into little valleys which carried off the water, the declivity being always towards the Nile. There was no baggage (the tent of the Ras and that of the king excepted) which had as yet come over, and these were wet, being drenched in the river. The Fit-Auraris had left, ready made, two rafts for Ozoro Esther, and the other two ladies, with which she might have easily been conducted over, and without much danger; but the Ras had made Ozoro Esther pass over in the same manner he had crossed himself, many swimming on each side of her mule. She would have fain staid on the east side, but it was in vain to remonstrate. She was with child, and had fainted several times; but yet nothing could prevail with the Ras to trust her on the other bank till morning. She crossed, however, safely, though almost dead with fright. It was said he had determined to put her to death if she did not pass, from jealousy of her falling into the hands of Fasil; but this I will by no means vouch, nor do I believe it. The night was cold and clear, and a strong wind at north-west had blown all the afternoon. Guebra Mascal, and several of Ras Michael's officers, had purposely tarried behind for gathering in the stragglers. The river had abated to-

wards mid-night, when, whether from this cause, or, as they alledged, that they found a more favourable ford, all the Tigré infantry, and many mules lightly loaded, passed with less difficulty than any of the rest had done, and with them several loads of flour; luckily also my two tents and mules, to my great consolation; came safely over when it was near morning. Still the army continued to pass, and those that could swim seemed best off. I was in the greatest distress for the good Ammonios, my lieutenant, who was missing, and did not join us till late in the morning, having been all night busy in seeking Ayto Aylo, the queen's chamberlain, and Tecla Mariam, who were his great companions, drowned probably at the first attempt to pass, as they were never after heard of.

THE greatest part of the foot, however, crossed in the night; and many were of opinion that we had mistaken the passage altogether, by going too high, and being in too great a haste; the banks, indeed, were so steep, it was very plain that this could never have been an accustomed ford for cavalry. Before day-light the van and the center had all joined the king; the number, I believe, that had perished was never distinctly known, for those that were missing were thought to have remained on the other side with Kefla Yafous, at least for that day. Kefla Yafous, indeed, with the rear and all the baggage of the army, had remained on the other side, and, with very few tents pitched, waited the dawn of the morning.

It happened that the priests of the church of Mariam Net, in the confusion, had been left unheeded, chained arm to arm, in the rear with Kefla Yafous, and they had begun interceding.

interceding with him to procure their pardon and dismissal. He was a man, as I said, of the greatest affability and complacency, and heard every one speak with the utmost patience. These priests, terrified to death lest Michael should pull their eyes out, or exercise some of his usual cruelties upon them, which was certainly his intention by bringing them with him to Gondar, frankly declared to Kessa Yafous what they apprehended. They said that they had never known a ford there before, though they had lived many years in the neighbourhood; nor had ever heard of one at Kerr, the first cataract, which the guides had persuaded the rather of the two; they did believe, therefore, that Michael's guides had deceived him on purpose, and that they intended the same thing by him to-morrow, if he attempted to pass at Kerr. They told him further, that, about three days before Michael had arrived in the neighbourhood of Samseen, they had heard a nagareet beat regularly every evening at sun-set, behind the high woody hill in front, whereon was the church of Boskon Abbo; that they had seen also a man the day before who had left Welleta Yafous, Fasil's principal officer and confident, at Goutto, waiting the arrival of some more troops to pass the Nile there, whence they doubted not that there was treachery intended..

THE sagacious and prudent Kessa Yafous weighed every word of this in his mind, and, combining all the circumstances together, was immediately convinced that there had been a snare laid by Fasil for them. Entering further into conversation with the priests, and encouraging them with assurances of reward instead of punishment, he inquired if they certainly knew any better ford below. They answered

ed him they knew of no ford but the common one of Delakus, about eight miles below; that it was true it was not good, and it was deeper than ordinary, as the rainy season had begun early, but that it was so perfectly fordable that all the country people had gone with asses loaded with butter and honey, and other provisions, for the market of Gondar last week; from whence they inferred that he could easily ford it, and safely, even with loaded mules. They advised him farther, as the night was dry, and the rain fell generally in the day, to lose no time, but to collect his troops, weary as they were, as soon as possible, and send the heavy baggage before; that there was no river or torrent in their way, but Amlac Ohha, which, at that time of night, was at its lowest, and they might then pass it at their leisure, while he covered them with his troops behind; that in such case they might all be safe over the ford by the time the sun became to be hot in the morning, about which hour they did not doubt he would be attacked by Welleta Yafous. They said farther, that, though they could claim little merit, being prisoners, by offering to be his guides, yet he might perhaps find his use in the measure, and would thereby prove their faith and loyalty to the king.

ALTHOUGH all this bore the greatest shew of probability, and the lives of the informers were in his hands, that cautious general would not undertake a step of so much consequence, as to separate the rear of the army from the king, without further inquiry. There was then in his camp, waiting the event of next day, two of the guides who had brought them to this ford; a third had gone over the river with Ras Michael. There was likewise in his camp a servant of Nanna Georgis, who had arrived some days before

fore with information to Ras Michael. The two guides pretended to be Agows, consequently friends to the king. He called these into his presence, and ordered them to be put in irons, and then sent for the servant of Nanna Georgis. This man immediately knew the one to be his countryman, but declared the other was a Galla, both of them servants of Fasil, and then living in Mairsha.

KEFLA YASOUS immediately ordered the Kanitz Kitzera (the executioner of the camp) to attend, and having exhorted them to declare the truth for fear of what would speedily follow, and no satisfactory answer being given, he directed the eyes of the eldest, the Galla, to be plucked out; and he continuing still obstinate, he delivered him to the soldiers, who hewed him to pieces with their large knives in presence of his companion. In the mean time the priests had been very earnest with the young one, the Agow, to confess, with better success; but this execution, to which he had been witness, was more prevailing than all their arguments. Upon promise of life, liberty, and reward, he declared that he had left Fasil behind a hill, which he then shewed, about three miles distant, in front of the king's army, and had gone down to Welleta Yasous, who was waiting at Goutto ready to pass the Nile: that they were sent forward to decoy the king to that passage, under the name of a ford, where they expected great part of the army would perish if they attempted to pass: that Fasil was to attack such part of the king's army as should have passed as soon as it appeared upon the heights above the river, but not till, by the firing on the east side, he knew that Welleta Yasous was engaged with the rear, or part of the army, which should still remain on that side separated by the river: that they did



not imagine Ras Michael could have passed that night, but that to-morrow he would certainly be attacked by Fasil, as his companion, who had crossed with Ras Michael, was to go directly to Fasil and inform him of the situation of the King, the Ras, and the army.

KEFLA YASOUS sent two of his principal officers, with a distinct detail of this whole affair, to the king. It being now dark, they swam the river on horseback, with much more difficulty and danger than we had done, and they found Ras Michael and the king in council, to whom they told their message with every circumstance, adding, that Kefla Yasous, as the only way to preserve the army, quite spent with fatigue, and encumbered with such a quantity of baggage, had struck his tent, and would, by that time, be on his march for the ford of Delakus, which he should cross, and, after leaving a party to guard the baggage and sick, he should with the freshest of his men join the army. The spy that had passed with Michael and the king was now sought for, but he had lost no time, and was gone off to Fasil at Boskon Abbo. Kefla Yasous, having seen all the baggage on their way before him, did, as his last act, perhaps not strictly consistent with justice, hang the poor unfortunate informer, the Agow, upon one of the trees at the ford, that Welleta Yasous, when he passed in the morning, might see how certainly his secret was discovered, and that consequently he was on his guard.

On the 28th he crossed Amlac Ohha with some degree of difficulty, and was obliged to abandon several baggage-mules. He advanced after this with as great diligence as possible to Delakus, and found the ford, though deep, much  
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better than he expected. He had pitched his tent on the high road to Gondar, before Welleta Yafous knew he was decamped, and of this passage he immediately advised Michael refreshing his troops for any emergency.

ABOUT two in the afternoon Welleta Yafous appeared with his horse on the other side of the Nile, but it was then too late. Kefla Yafous was so strongly posted, and the banks of the river so guarded with fire-arms, down to the water-edge, that Fasil and all his army would not have dared to attempt the passage, or even approach the banks of the river.

As soon as Ras Michael received the intelligence, he dispatched the Fit-Auraris, Netcho, to take post upon the ford of the Kelti, a large river, but rather broad than deep, about three miles off. He himself followed early in the morning, and passed the Kelti just at sun-rise, without halting; he then advanced to meet Kefla Yafous, as the army began to want provisions, the little flour that had been brought over, or which the soldiers had taken with them, being nearly exhausted during that night and the morning after. It was found, too, that the men had but little powder, none of them having recruited their quantity since the hunting of the deer; but what they had was in perfect good order, being kept in horns and small wooden bottles, corked in such a manner as to be secured from water of any kind. Kefla Yafous, therefore, being in possession of the baggage, the powder, and the provisions, a junction with him was absolutely necessary, and they expected to effect this at Wainadega, about twenty miles from their last night's quarters.

The ground was all firm and level between Kelti and the Avoley, a space of about 15 miles.

RAS MICHAEL halted after passing the Kelti, and sent on the Fit-Auraris about five miles before him ; he then ordered what quantity of flour, or provisions of any kind could be found, to be distributed among the men, and directed them to refresh themselves for an hour before they again began their march, because they might expect soon to engage with Fasil. The day being clear, and the sun hot, those that the cold affected, from the passage of last night, began to recover their former health and agility ; their clothes were now all dry, clean washed, and comfortable ; and had it not been for the fatigue that remained from the two last days, and the short allowance to which they were reduced, perhaps there were few occasions wherein the army was fitter for an engagement. Being now disembarrassed from dangerous rivers, they were on dry solid ground, which they had often marched over before in triumph, and where all the villages around them, lying in ruins, put them in mind of many victorious campaigns, and especially the recent one at Fagitta over this same Fasil. Add to all this, they were on their way home to Gondar, and that alone made them march with a tenfold alacrity. Gondar, they thought, was to be the end of all their cares, a place of relaxation and ease for the rest of the rainy season.

It was between twelve and one we heard the Fit-Auraris engaged, and there was sharp firing on both sides, which soon ceased. Michael ordered his army immediately to halt ; he and the king, and Billetana Gueta Tecla, commanded the van ; Welleta Michael, and Ayto Tesfos of Siré, the rear. Having  
marched

marched a little farther, he changed his order of battle; he drew up the body of troops which he commanded, together with the king, on a flat, large hill, with two valleys running parallel to the sides of it like trenches. Beyond these trenches were two higher ridges of hills that ran along the side of them, about half a musket-shot from him; the valleys were soft ground which yet could bear horses, and these hills, on his right and on his left, advanced about 100 yards on each side farther than the line of his front. The grofs of these side-divisions occupied the height; but a line of soldiers from them came down to the edge of the valleys like wings. In the plain ground, about three hundred yards directly in his front, he had placed all the cavalry, except the king's body-guards drawn up before him, commanded by an old officer of Mariam Barea. As prince George was in the cavalry, he strongly solicited the Ras at least to let him remain with them, and see them engage; but the Ras, considering his extreme youth and natural rashness, called him back, and placed him beside me before the king. It was not long before the Fit-Auraris's two messengers arrived, running like deer along the plain, which was not absolutely flat, but sloped gently down towards us, declining, as I should guess, not a fathom in fifteen.

THEIR account was, that they had fallen in with Fasil's Fit-Auraris; that they had attacked him smartly, and, though the enemy were greatly superior, being all horse, except a few musqueteers, had killed four of them. The Ras having first heard the message of the Fit-Auraris alone, he sent a man to report it to the king; and, immediately after this, he ordered two horsemen to go full gallop along the east side of the hill, the low road to Wainadega, to warn Kefla Yafous

of Fasil's being near at hand; he likewise directed the Fit-Auraris to advance cautiously till he had seen Fasil, and to pursue no party that should retreat before him.

THE King, the Ras, and the whole army, began to be in pain for Kessa Yafous; and we should have changed our ground, and marched forward immediately, had we not heard the alarm-guns fired by Fit-Auraris Netcho, and presently he and his party came in, the men running, and the horses at full gallop. Ras Michael had given his orders, and returned to the presence of the king on his mule; he could not venture among horse, being wounded in the middle of the thigh, and lame in that leg, but always charged on a mule among the musquetry. He said shortly to the king, "No fear, Sir, stand firm; Fasil is lost if he fights to-day on this ground."

FASIL appeared at the top of the hill. I have no guess about the number of such large bodies of troops, but, by those more used to such computations, it is said he had about 3000 horse. It was a fine sight, but the evening was beginning to be overcast. After having taken a full view of the army, they all began to move slowly down the hill, beating their kettle-drums. There were two trees a little before the cavalry, that were advanced beyond our front. Fasil sent down a party to skirmish with these, and he himself halted after having made a few paces down the hill. The two bodies of horse met just half way at the two trees, and mingled together, as appeared at least, with very decisive intention; but whether it was by orders or from fear, (for they were not overmatched in numbers) our horse turned their backs and came precipitately down, so that we were afraid they

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would

would break in upon the foot. Several shots were fired from the center at them by order of the Ras, who cried out aloud in derision, "Take away these horses and send them to the mill." They divided, however, to the right and left, into the two grassy valleys under cover of the musquetry, and a very few horse of Fasil's were carried in along with them, and slain by the soldiers on the side of the hill. On the king's side no man of note was missing but Welleta Michael, nephew of Ras Michael, whose horse falling, he was taken prisoner and carried off by Fasil.

A FEW minutes after this, arrived a messenger from Fasil; a dwarf, named Doho, a man always employed on errands of this kind; it is an intercourse which is permitted, and the messenger not only protected, but rewarded, as I have before observed; it is a singular custom, and none but shrewd fellows are sent, very capable of making observations, and Doho was one of these. He told the Ras to prepare immediately, for Fasil intended to attack him as soon as he had brought his foot up: Doho further added a request from his master, as a mark of his duty, that the king might not change his dress that day, lest he might fall into the hands of some of the stranger troops of Galla, who might not know him otherwise, or shew the proper respect to his person. The Ras, I was told afterwards, for he was too far before us to hear him, laughed violently at this compliment. "Tell Fasil, says he, to wait but a few minutes where he now is, and I promise him that the king shall dress in any way he pleases." When Doho's message was told to the king, he sent back answer to Ras Michael, "Let Doho tell Fasil from me, that, if I had known those two trees had been where they are, I would have brought Welleta Gabriel,

brici, Ozoro Esther's steward, to him; by which he very archly alluded to the battle of Fagitta, where that drunkard, shooting from behind a tree, and killing one Galla, made all the rest fly for fear of the zibib.

Dono being thus dismissed, the whole army advanced immediately at a very brisk pace, hooping and screaming, as is their custom, in a most harsh and barbarous manner, crying out Hatzé Ali! Michael Ali! But Fasil, who saw the forward countenance of the king's troops, and that a few minutes would lay him under necessity of risking a battle, which he did not intend, withdrew his troops at a smart trot over the smooth downs, returning towards Boskon Abbo. It seems, as we heard afterwards, he was in as great anxiety about the fate of Welleta Yafous, of whom he had no intelligence, as we had been for that of Kefla Yafous; and he had got as yet no intelligence till he had taken Welleta Michael prisoner; he had heard no firing, nor did he consequently know whether Kefla Yafous had passed the Nile with the Ras or not; he had, therefore, left his camp, and marched with his horse only to take a view of Michael, but had no sort of intention to give him battle; and he was now very much exasperated against both Gusho and Powussen, by whom he saw plainly that he had been betrayed.

This is what was called the battle of Limjour, from a village burnt by Ras Michael last campaign, which stood where the two trees are; the name of a battle is surely more than it deserves. Had Fasil been half as willing as the Ras, it could not have failed being a decisive one. The Ras, who saw that Fasil would not fight, easily penetrated his reasons, and no sooner was he gone, and his own drums silent,

than he heard a nagareet beat, and knew it to be that of Kefla Yafous. This general encamped upon the river Avoley, leaving his tents and baggage under a proper guard, and had marched with the best and freshest of his troops to join Michael before the engagement. All was joy at meeting, every rank of men joined in extolling the merit and conduct of their leaders; and, indeed, it may be fairly said, the situation of the king and the army was desperate at that instant, when the troops were separated on different sides of the Nile; nor could they have been saved but by the speedy resolution taken by Kefla Yafous to march without loss of time and pass at the ford of Delakus, and the diligence and activity with which he executed that resolution.

ALTHOUGH a good part of Kefla Yafous's soldiers were left at the Avoley, the Ras, as a mark of confidence, gave him the command of the rear. We were retreating before an enemy, and it was, therefore, the post of honour, where the Ras would have been himself, had not Kefla Yafous joined us. We soon marched the five miles, or thereabout, that remained to the Avoley, and arrived just as the sun was setting, and there heard from the spies that Welleta Yafous with his troops had retired again to Goutto, after having been joined by Woodage Afahel. There again were fresh rejoicings, as every one recovered their baggage and provisions, many rejoined their friends they had given over as lost at the passage, and the whole army prepared their supper. All but Ras Michael seemed to have their thoughts bent upon sleep and rest; whilst he, the most infirm and aged of the army, no sooner was under cover of his tent than he ordered the drum to beat for assembling a council. What passed there I did not know; I believe nothing but



but a repetition of the circumstances that induced Kefla Yafous to advance to Delakus, for, after supper, just before the king went to bed in the evening, a man from Kefla Yafous brought the four priests of Mariam Net, who had been the guides to the ford at Delakus. The king ordered meat to be set before them, but they had done very well already with Kefla Yafous, and, therefore, only took a small piece of bread and a cup of bouza, the eating and drinking in presence of the king being an assurance that their life was safe and pardon real. They had then five ounces of gold, and several changes of clothes given to each of them, and the king took them to Gondar with him, to provide for them there, out of the reach of the revenge of Fasil, and placed them in the church of Hamar Noh\*.

THE army marched next day to Dingleber, a high hill, or rock, approaching so close to the lake as scarcely to leave a passage between. Upon the top of this rock is the king's house. As we arrived very early there, and were now out of Fasil's government, the king insisted upon treating Ras Michael and all the people of consideration. A great quantity of cattle had been sent thither from Dembea by those who had estates in the neighbourhood, out of which he gave ten oxen to Ras Michael, ten to Kefla Yafous, the same number to several others, and one to myself, with two ounces of gold for Strates and Sebastos to buy mules; but they had already provided themselves; for, besides the two they rode upon of mine, they and my servants had picked up four others in very good condition, whose masters had probably perished in the river, for they were never claimed afterwards.

JUST

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\* This is a large church belonging to the palace, called by this extraordinary name, *Noah's Ark*.

Just as the king sat down to dinner an accident happened that occasioned great trepidation among all his servants. A black eagle\* was chased into the king's tent by some of the birds of prey that hover about the camp; and it was after in the mouth of every one the king would be dethroned by a man of inferior birth and condition. Every body at that time looked to Fasil: the event proved the application false, though the omen was true. Powussen of Begemder was as low-born as Fasil, as great a traitor, but more successful, to whom the ominous preface pointed; and, though we cannot but look upon the whole as accident, it was but too soon fulfilled.

In the evening of the 29th arrived at Dingleber two horsemen from Fasil, clad in habits of peace, and without arms; they were known to be two of his principal servants, were grave, genteel, middle-aged men; this message had nothing of Doho's buffoonery. They had an audience early after their coming, first of the Ras, then of the King. They said, and said truly, that Fasil had repassed the Kelti, was encamped on the opposite side, and was not yet joined by Welleta Yafous. Their errand was, to desire that the Ras might not fatigue his men by unnecessarily hurrying on to Gondar, because he might rest secured of receiving no further molestation from Fasil their master, as he was on his march to Burè. They told the Ras the whole of the conspiracy, as far as it regarded him, and the agreement that Powussen and Gutho had made with their master to surround him at Derdora: they mentioned, moreover, how sensible Fasil was of their

treason towards him; that, instead of keeping their word, they had left him to engage the King and the Ras's whole force at a time when they knew the greatest part of his Galla troops were retired to the other side of the Nile, and could be assembled with difficulty: That if the Ras by chance had crossed at Delakus, as Kefla Yafous had done, instead of embarrassing his army among the rivers of Maitsha, and crossing the Nile at that most dangerous place near Amlac-Ohha, (a passage never before attempted in the rainy season) the consequence would have been, that he must have either fought at great disadvantage with an inferior army against the Ras, or have retired to Metchakel, leaving his whole country to the mercy of his enemies. Fasil declared his resolution never again to appear in arms against the king, but that he would hold his government under him, and pay the accustomed taxes punctually: he promised also, that he would renounce all manner of connection with Gusho and Powussen, as he had already done, and he would take the field against them next season with his whole force, whenever the king ordered him. The messengers concluded, with desiring the Ras to give Fasil his grand-daughter, Welleta Selassé, in marriage, and that he would then come to Gondar without distrust.

At the audience they had of the king the same night, they added, That Fasil could not trust Ras Michael, he broke his word so often, and had so many reservations and evasions in his promises.

THE Ras, though he did not believe all this, made no difficulty in agreeing to every thing that they desired. He promised the grand-daughter; and, as an earnest of his believing

lieving the rest, the king's two nagareets were brought to the door of the tent, where, to our very great surprise, we heard it proclaimed, "Fasil is governor of the Agow, Maitsha, Gojam, and Damot; prosperity to him, and long may he live a faithful servant to the king, our master!"—This was an extraordinary revolution in so small a space of time. It was scarce 43 hours since Fasil had laid a scheme for drowning the greater part of the army in the Nile, and cutting the throats of the residue on both sides of it; it was not twenty-four hours, since he had met us to fight in open field, and now he was become the king's lieutenant-general in four of the most opulent provinces of Abyssinia. This was produced, however, by the necessity of the times, and both parties were playing at the same game who should over-reach the other. Fasil's messengers were magnificently clothed, and it was first intended they should have gone back to him; but, after reflection, another person was sent, these two chusing to go to Gondar with the king to remain hostages for Fasil's word, and to bring back his investiture from thence to Burè. The whole camp abandoned itself to joy.

LATE in the evening Ozoro Esther came to the king's tent. She had been ill, and alarmed, as she well might, at the passage of the Nile, which had given her a more delicate look than ordinary; she was dressed all in white, and I thought I seldom had seen so handsome a woman. The king, as I have mentioned, had sent ten oxen to Ras Michael, but he had given twenty to Ozoro Esther; and it was to thank him for this extraordinary mark of favour that she had come to visit him in his tent. I had for some time past, indeed, thought they were not insensible to the merit of each other. Upon her thanking the king for the distinction

he had shewn her; Madam, said he, your husband Ras Michael is intent upon employing, in the best way possible for my service, those of the army that are strong and vigorous; you, I am told, bestow your care on the sick and disabled; and, by your attention, they are restored to their former health and activity; the strong active soldier eats the cows that I have sent to the Ras; the enfeebled and sick recover upon yours, for which reason I sent you a double portion, that you may have it in your power to do double goods. After this the room was cleared, and she had an audience alone for half an hour. I doubt very much whether Ras Michael had any share in the conversation; the King was in the very gayest humour, and went to rest about twelve. The Ras loved Ozoro Esther, but was not jealous.

I HAD violent threatenings of the ague, and had gone to bed full of reflections on extraordinary events that, in a few hours, had as it were crowded upon one another. I had appointed Fasil's servants to come to my tent in the evening. I understood a council had been called, to which Welleta Kyrillos, the king's historiographer, had been sent for, and instructed how to give an account of this campaign of Maitsha, the passage of the Nile, and the meeting with Fasil at Limjour. Kessa Yafous's march to Delakus, and passage there, were ordered to be written in gold letters, and so was Fasil's appointment to Damot and Maitsha. From this authentic copy, and what I myself heard or observed, I formed these notes of the campaign.

ON the 30th of May nothing material happened, and, in a few days, we arrived at Gondar. The day before we entered, being encamped on the river Kemona, came two messengers.

sengers from Gusso and Powussen, with various excuses why they had not joined. They were very ill received by the Ras, and refused an audience of the king. Their present, which is always new clothes to some value, was a small piece of dark-blue Surar cloth, value about half-a-crown, intended as an affront; they were not suffered to sleep in the camp, but forwarded to Fasil where they were going.

THE 3d of June the army encamped on the river Kahha, under Gondar. From the time we left Dingleber, some one or other of the Ras's confidential friends had arrived every day. Several of the great officers of state reached us at the Kemonia, many others met us at Abba Samuel. I did not perceive the news they brought increased the spirits either of the King or the Ras; the soldiers, however, were all contented, because they were at home; but the officers, who saw farther, wore very different countenances, especially those that were of Amhara.

I, in particular, had very little reason to be pleased; for, after having undergone a constant series of fatigues, dangers, and expences, I was returned to Gondar disappointed of my views in arriving at the source of the Nile, without any other acquisition than a violent ague. The place where that river rises remained still as great a secret as it had been ever since the catastrophe of Phaeton:—

*Nilus in extremum fugit perterritus orbem,  
Occulitque caput, quod adhuc latet.*——

OVID. METAM. lib. ii.

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## CHAP. VII.

*King and Army retreat to Tigré—Interesting Events following that Retreat—The Body of Joas is found—Favourable Turn of the King's Affairs—Socinius, a new King, proclaimed at Gondar.*

**T**HE king had heard that Gusho and Powussen, with Gojam under Ayto Aylo, and all the troops of Belessen and Lasta, were ready to fall upon him in Gondar as soon as the rains should have swelled the Tacazzé, so that the army could not retire into Tigré; and it was now thought to be the instant this might happen, as the king's proclamation in favour of Fasil, especially the giving him Gojam, it was not doubted, would hasten the motion of the rebels. Accordingly that very morning, after the king arrived, the proclamation was made at Gondar, giving Fasil Gojam, Damot, the Agow, and Maitsha; after which his two servants were again magnificently clothed, and sent back with honour.

As I had never despaired, some way or other, of arriving at the fountains of the Nile, from which we were not fifty miles distant when we turned back at Karcagna, so I never neglected to improve every means that held out to me the least probability of accomplishing this end. I had been very attentive and servicable to Fasil's servants while in the camp. I spoke greatly of their master, and, when they went away, gave each of them a small present for himself, and a trifle also for Fasil. They had, on the other hand, been very importunate with me as a physician to prescribe something for a cancer on the lip, as I understood it to be, with which Welleta Yafous, Fasil's principal general, was afflicted.

I HAD been advised, by some of my medical friends, to carry along with me a preparation of hemlock, or cicuta, recommended by Dr Stork, a physician at Vienna. A considerable quantity had been sent me from France by commission, with directions how to use it. To keep on the safe side, I prescribed small doses to Welleta Yafous, being much more anxious to preserve myself from reproach than warmly solicitous about the cure of my unknown patient. I gave him positive advice to avoid eating raw meat; to keep to a milk diet, and drink plentifully of whey when he used this medicine. They were overjoyed at having succeeded so well in their commission, and declared before the king, That Fasil their master would be more pleased with receiving a medicine that would restore Welleta Yafous to health, than with the magnificent appointments the king's goodness had bestowed upon him. "If it is so, said I, in this day of grace, I will ask two favours."—"And that's a rarity, says the king; come, out with them; I don't believe anybody is desirous  
you



you should be refused ; I certainly am not ; only I bar one of them, you are not to relapse into your usual despondency, and talk of going home.”—“ Well, Sir, said I, I obey, and that is not one of them. They are these—You shall give me, and oblige Fasil to ratify it, the village Geesh, and the source where the Nile rises, that I may be from thence furnished with honey for myself and servants ; it shall stand me instead of Tangouri, near Emfras, and, in value, it is not worth so much. The second is, That, when I shall see that it is in his power to carry me to Geesh, and shew me those sources, Fasil shall do it upon my request, without fee or reward, and without excuse or evasion.

THEY all laughed at the easiness of the request ; all declared that this was nothing, and wished to do ten times as much. The king said, “ Tell Fasil I do give the village of Geesh, and those fountains he is so fond of, to Yagoube and his posterity for ever, never to appear under another’s name in the deftar, and never to be taken from him, or exchanged, either in peace or war. Do you swear this to him in the name of your master.” Upon which they took the two fore fingers of my right hand, and, one after the other, laid the two fore fingers of their right hand across them, then kissed them ; a form of swearing used there, at least among those that call themselves Christians. And as Azage Kyrillos, the king’s secretary and historian, was then present, the king ordered him to enter the gift in the deftar, or revenue-book, where the taxes and revenue of the king’s lands are registered. “ I will write it, says the old man, in letters of gold, and, poor as I am, will give him a village four times better than either Geesh or Tangouri, if he will take a wife and stay amongst us, at least till my eyes

are closed." It will be easily guessed this rendered the conversation a cheerful one. Fasil's servants retired to set out the next day, gratified to their utmost wish, and, as soon as the king was in bed, I went to my apartment likewise.

BUT very different thoughts were then occupying Michael and his officers. They could not trust Fasil, and, besides, he could do them no service; the rain was set in, and he was gone home; the western part of the kingdom was ready to rise upon them; Woggora, to the north, immediately in his way, was all in arms, and impatient to revenge the severities they had suffered when Michael first marched to Gondar. The Tacazzé, which separates Tigre from Woggora, and runs at the foot of the high mountains of Samen, was one of the largest and most rapid rivers in Abyssinia, and, though not the first to overflow, was, when swelled to its height, impassable by horse or foot, rolling down prodigious stones and trees with its current. Dangerous as the passage was, however, there was no safety but in attempting it: Michael, therefore, and every soldier with him, were of opinion that, if they must perish, they should rather meet death in the river, on the confines of their own country, than fall alive into the hands of their enemies in Amhara. For this, preparation had been making night and day, since Ras Michael entered Gondar, and probably before it.

THERE WAS in Belessen, on the nearest and easiest way to a ford of the Tacazzè, a man of quality called Adero, and his son Zor Woldo. To these two Ras Michael used to trust the care of the police of Gondar when he was absent upon any expedition; they were very active and capable, but had

fallen from their allegiance, and joined Powuffen and Gusfo, at least in councils. The Ras, immediately upon arriving at Gondar, dissembling what he knew of their treason, had sent to them to prepare a quantity of flour for the troops that were to pass their way; to get together what horses they could as quietly as possible; to send him word what state the ford was in; and also, if Powuffen had made any movement forward; or if Ayto Tesfos, governor of Samen, had shewn any disposition to dispute the passage through Woggora into Tigré. Word was immediately returned by the traitor Adero, that the ford was as yet very passable; that it was said Powuffen was marching towards Maitsha; that Ayto Tesfos was at home upon his high rock, the seat of his government, and that no time was to be lost, as he believed he had already flour enough to suffice; he added also, that it would be dangerous to collect more, for it would give the alarm. This was all received as truth, and a messenger sent back with orders, that Zor Woldo should leave the flour in small bags at Ebenaat, and that he should himself and his father wait the Ras at the ford, with what horse they had, the fourth day from that, in the evening.

THE next morning the whole army was in motion. I had the evening before taken leave of the king in an interview which cost me more than almost any one in my life. The substance was, That I was ill in my health, and quite unprepared to attend him into Tigré; that my heart was set upon completing the only purpose of my coming into Abyssinia, without which I should return into my own country with disgrace; that I hoped, through his majesty's influence, Fasil might find some way for me to accomplish it; if not, I trusted soon to see him return, when I hoped it would

would be easy; but, if I then went to Tigré, I was fully persuaded I should never have the resolution to come again to Gondar.

He seemed to take heart at the confidence with which I spoke of his return. "You, Yagoube, says he, in a humble, complaining tone, could tell me, if you pleased, whether I shall or not, and what is to befall me; those instruments and those wheels, with which you are constantly looking at the stars, cannot be for any use unless for prying into futurity."—"Indeed, said I, prince, these are things by which we guide ships at sea, and by these we mark down the ways that we travel by land; teach them to people that never passed them before, and, being once traced, keep them thus to be known by all men for ever. But of the decrees of Providence, whether they regard you or myself, I know no more than the mule upon which you ride."—"Tell me then, I pray, tell me, what is the reason you speak of my return as certain?"—"I speak, said I, from observation, from reflections that I have made, much more certain than prophecies and divinations by stars. The first campaign of your reign at Fagitta, when you was relying upon the dispositions that the Ras had most ably and skillfully made, a drunkard, with a single shot, defeated a numerous army of your enemies. Powussen and Gusso were your friends, as you thought, when you marched out last, yet they had, at that very instant, made a league to destroy you at Derdera; and nothing but a miracle could have saved you, shut up between two lakes and three armies. It was neither you nor Michael that disordered their councils, and made them fail in what they had concerted. You was for burning Samseen, whilst Woodage Afahel was there in ambush with a

large force, with a knowledge of all the fords, and master of all the inhabitants of the country. Remember how you passed those rivers, holding hand in hand, and drawing one another over. Could you have done this with an enemy behind you, and such an enemy as Woodage Afahel? He would have followed and harrassed you till you took the ford at Goutto, and there was Welleta Yafous waiting to oppose you with 6000 men on the opposite bank. When Ras Michael marched by Mariam Net, he found the priests at their homes. Was that the case in any of the other churches we passed? No; all were fled for fear of Michael; yet these were more guilty than any by their connections with Fasil; notwithstanding which, they alone, of all others, staid, though they knew not why; an invisible hand held them that they might operate your preservation. Nothing could have saved the army but the desperate passage, so tremendous that it will exceed the belief of man, crossing the Nile that night. Yet if the priests had crossed before this, not a man would have proceeded to the ford. The priests would have been Ras Michael's prisoners, and, on the other side, they never would have spoken a word whilst in the presence of Michael. Providence, therefore, kept them with Kefla Yafous; all was discovered, and the army saved by the retreat, and his speedy passing at the ford of Delakus.

WHAT would have happened to Kefla Yafous, had Fasil marched down to Delakus either before or after the passage? Kefla Yafous would have been cut off before Ras Michael had passed the Kelti; instead of which, an unknown cause detained him, most infatuated-like, beating his kettle-drums behind Boskon Abbo, while our army under the Ras was swimming

swimming that dangerous river, and most of us passing the night, naked, without tents, provision, or powder. Nor did he ever think of presenting himself till we had warmed ourselves by an easy march in a fine day, when we were every way his superiors, and Kefla Yafous in his rear. From all these special marks of the favour of an over ruling Providence, I do believe stedfastly that God will not leave his work half finished. "He it is who, governing the whole universe, has yet reserved specially to himself the department of war; he it is who has stiled himself the God of Battles." The king was very much moved, and, as I conceived, persuaded. He said, "O Yagoube, go but with me to Tigrè, and I will do for you whatever you desire me."—"You do, Sir, said I, whatever I desire you, and more. I have told you my reasons why that cannot be; let me stay here a few months, and wait your return." The king then advised me to live entirely at Koscam with the Iteghé, without going out unless Fasil came to Gondar, and to send him punctually word how I was treated. Upon this we parted with inexpressible reluctance. He was a king worthy to reign over a better people; my heart was deeply penetrated with those marks of favour and condescension which I had uniformly received from him ever since I entered his palace.

ON the 5th of June, while Powussen, Adero, and the conspirators were waiting his passage through Belessen, (that is to the S. W.) the king's army marched towards Koscam, over the mountain Debra Tzai towards Walkayt, and the low, hot provinces of Abyssinia which lie to the N. E. so that the distance between them increased every day in the greatest proportion possible.

THE queen ordered her gates at Koscam to be shut. A little before the Ras mounted his mule, Ozoro Efther and her servants took refuge with her mother the Iteghè; Gondar was like a town which had been taken by an enemy; everyone that had arms in his hands did just what he pleased.

Two very remarkable things were said to have happened the night before Michael left the city. He had always pretended, that, before he undertook an expedition, a person, or spirit, appeared to him, who told him the issue and consequence of the measures he was then taking; this he imagined to be St Michael the archangel, and he presumed very much upon this intercourse. In a council that night, where none but friends were present, he had told them that his spirit had appeared some nights before, and ordered him, in his retreat, to surprise the mountain of Wechné, and either slay or carry with him to Tigré the princes sequestered there. Nebrit Tecla, governor of Axum, with his two sons, (all concerned in the late king's murder) were, it is said, strong advisers of this measure; but Ras Michael, (probably fatiated with royal blood already) Kefla Yafous, and all the more worthy men of any consequence, acting on principle, absolutely refused to consent to it. It was upon this the passage by Belessen was substituted instead of the attempt on Wechné, and it was determined to conceal it.

THE next advice which, the Ras said, this devil, or angel, gave him, was, that they should set fire to the town of Gondar, and burn it to the ground, otherwise his good fortune was to leave him there for ever; and for this there was a great number of advocates, Michael seeming to lean that way himself. But, when it was reported to the king, that

young prince put a direct negative upon it, by declaring that he would rather stay in Gondar, and fall by the hands of his enemies, than either conquer them, or escape from them, by the commission of so enormous a crime. When this was publicly known, it procured the king universal good-will, as was experienced afterwards, when he and Michael were finally defeated, and taken prisoners, upon their march in return to Gondar.

THE army advanced rapidly towards Walkayt. Being near the Tacazzé, they turned short upon Mai-Lumi, (the River of Limes) the governor of which, as I have already said, in our journey from Mafuah, detained us several days at Addergey with a view to rob us, upon a report prevailing that Ras Michael was defeated at Fagitta. This thief the king surprised and made prisoner, set fire to his house after having plundered it, and carried him as hostage to Tigré, for the payment of a sum which he laid upon every village to save them from being set on fire.

BEING now safely arrived on the banks of the Tacazzé, the first province beyond which is that of Siré, Michael sent before him Ayto 'Tefos the governor, a man exceedingly beloved, to assemble all sort of assistance for passing the river. Every one flocked to the stream with the utmost alacrity; the water was deep, and the baggage wet in crossing, but the bottom was good and hard; they passed both expeditiously and safely, and were received in Siré, and then in Tigré, with every demonstration of joy.

MICHAEL, now arrived in his government, set himself seriously to unite every part under his own jurisdiction. It was now the rainy season; there was no possibility of taking the field,



field, and a rebellion prevailed in two different districts of his province. The sons of Kafmati Woldo, whose father Ras Michael put to death, had declared for themselves, in their paternal government of Enderta, and Netcho who married Ras Michael's daughter, had taken possession of the mountain Aromata, commonly called Haramat, an ancient strong-hold of his father's, of which Michael had made himself master, while yet a young man, after besieging it fifteen years. Netcho had also united himself with Za Menfus Kedus, a man of great property in that and the neighbouring country. Enderta is a flat, fertile territory, in the very south-east of Abyssinia, depending on Tigré, and the mountain Aromata is situated near the middle of that province; before taking the field, Michael had directed the two Woldos to be assassinated during a feast at Enderta, and their party dispersed of itself without farther effort.

THE mountain shewed a better countenance, and seemed to promise employment for a long time; it was garrisoned by old and veteran troops who had served under Ras Michael. Netcho was the son of his hereditary enemy, anciently governor of that mountain, whom he had reconciled by giving him his daughter in marriage; notwithstanding which he had now rebelled, just as the Ras marched to Maitsha against Fasil, by the persuasion of Gussho and Powusfen, purposely that he might form a diversion in Tigré, and for this reason he had little hopes of mercy, if ever he fell into the hands of Ras Michael. I had seen him often, and knew him; he was a tall, thin, dull man, of a soft temper, and easily imposed upon. Za Menfus, the other chief in the mountain, was a very active, resolute, enterprising man, of whom Michael was afraid. He had a large property all around the mountain; had been put in irons by Michael, and had escaped; besides, on his return to Tigré, he

had slain the father of Guebra Mascal, Michael's nephew by marriage, who was commander in chief of all the musquetry Michael had brought from Tigrè, so that he feared nothing so much as falling into Ras Michael's hands.

RAS MICHAEL saw the danger of leaving an enemy so prepared and so situated behind him; he therefore, before the rainy season was yet finished, ordered the whole mountain to be surrounded with barracks, or huts, for his soldiers; he also erected three houses for himself, the principal officers, and the king. The country people were called in to plow and sow the ground in the neighbourhood, so that his intention was plainly never to rise from thence till he had reduced the mountain of Aromata for the second time, after having once before succeeded in taking it, after fifteen years siege, from Netcho's father. There we shall leave him at this siege, and return to Gondar.

It was on the 10th of June that Guscho and Powussen entered Gondar, and next day, the 11th, waited upon the queen; they both beseeched her to return from Koscam to the capital, and take into her hands the reins of government for the interim: this she positively refused, unless peace was first made with Fasil. She said, that Fasil was the only person who had endeavoured to avenge his master Joas's death; that he had continued till that day in arms in that quarrel; and, notwithstanding all the offers that could be made her, she never would come to Gondar, nor take any part in public business, without this condition. Fasil, moreover, informed her by a messenger, that there was no trust to be put either in Guscho or Powussen; that they had failed in their engagement of following and fighting Ras

Michael in Mairsha, and had purposely staid at home till a superior army should fall upon him singly, and ravage his country : That they had broken their word a second time by entering into Gondar without him ; whereas the agreement was, that they all three should have done this at once, to settle the form of government by their joint deliberation. Many days passed in these negotiations ; Fasil always promising to come upon some condition or other, but never keeping his word, or stirring from Buré.

ON the 20th, the queen's servants, who had gone to offer terms of reconciliation to Fasil on the part of Gusho and Powussen, returned to their homes. The same day he ordered it to be proclaimed in the market-place, That Ayto Tesfos should be governor of Samen, and that whoever should rob on that road, or commit any violence, should suffer death. This was an act of power, purposely intended to affront Powussen and Gusho, and seemed to be opening a road for a correspondence with Ras Michael ; but, above all, it shewed contempt for their party and their cause, and that he considered his own as very distinct from theirs ; for Tesfos had taken arms in the late king's lifetime, at the same time, and upon the same principles and provocation, as Fasil, and had never laid down his arms, or made peace with Ras Michael, but kept his government in defiance of him.

ON the 24th, for fear of giving umbrage, I waited upon Gusho and Powussen at Gondar. I saw them in the same room where Ras Michael used to sit. They were both lying on the floor playing at draughts, with the figure of a draught-table drawn with chalk upon the carpet ; they offered

ferred no other civility or salutation, but, shaking me each by the hand, they played on, without lifting their heads, or looking me in the face.

Gusho began by asking me, "Would it not have been better if you had gone with me to Amhara, as I desired you, when I saw you last at Gondar? you would have saved yourself a great deal of fatigue and trouble in that dangerous march through Maitsha." To this I answered, "It is hard for me, who am a stranger, to know what is best to be done in such a country as this. I was, as you may have heard, the king's guest, and was favoured by him; it was my duty therefore to attend him, especially when he desired it; and such I am informed has always been the custom of the country; besides, Ras Michael laid his commands upon me." On this, says Powuffen, shaking his head, "You see he cannot forget Michael and the Tigré yet."—"Very naturally, added Gusho, they were good to him; he was a great man in their time; they gave him considerable sums of money, and he spent it all among his own soldiers, the king's guard, which they had given him to command after the Armenian. Yagoube taught him and his brother George to ride on horseback like the Franks, and play tricks with guns and pikes on horseback; folly, all of it to be sure, but I never heard he meddled in affairs, or that he spoke ill of any one, much less did any harm, like those rascals the Greeks when they were in favour in Joas's time, for it was not their fault they did not direct every thing."—"I hope I never did, said I; sure I am I never so intended, nor had I any provocation. I have received much good usage from every one; and the honour, if I do not forget, of a great many professions and assurances of friendship from you, said I, turning to Gusho. He hesi-

tated a little, and then added very superciliously, "Aye, aye, we were, as I think, always friends."—"You have had, says Powuffen, a devilish many hungry bellies since we left Gondar."—"You will excuse me, Sir, replied I, as to that article; I at no time ever found any difference whether you was in Gondar or not."—"There, says Gusho, by St Demetrius, there is a truth for you, and you don't often hear that in Begemder. May I suffer death if ever you gave a jar of honey to any white man in your life."—"But I, says Powuffen, sitting upright on the floor, and leaving off play, will give you, Yagoube, a present better than Gusho's paultry jars of honey. I have brought with me, addressing himself to me, your double-barrelled gun, and your sword, which I took from that son of a wh—c Guebra Mehedin: by St Michael, continued Powuffen, if I had got hold of that infidel I would have hanged him upon the first tree in the way for daring to say that he was one of my army when he committed that unmanly robbery upon your people. The Itaghé, your friend, would yesterday have given me ten loads of wheat for your gun, for she believes I am to carry it back to Begemder again, and do not mean to give it you, but come to my tent to-morrow and you shall have it." I very well understood his meaning, and that he wanted a present; but was happy to recover my gun at any rate.

I AROSE to get away, as what had passed did not please me; for before the king's retreat to Tigré, Gusho had sat in my presence uncovered to the waist, in token of humility; and many a cow, many a sheep, and jar of honey he had sent me; but my importance was now gone with the king; I was fallen! and they were resolved, I saw, to make me sensible of it. I told the queen, on my return, what had passed.

They

They are both brutes, said she; but Gusho should have known better.

THE next morning, being the 25th, about eight o'clock I went to Powuffen's tent. His camp was on the Kahha, near the church of Ledata, or the Nativity. After waiting near an hour, I was admitted; two women sat by him, neither handsome nor cleanly dressed; and he returned me my gun and sword, which was followed by a small present on my part. This, says he, turning to the women, is a man who knows every thing that is to come; who is to die, and who is to live; who is to go to the devil, and who not; who loves her husband, and who cuckolds him."—"Tell me then, Yagoube, says one of the women, will Tecla Haimanout and Michael ever come to Gondar again?"—"I do not know who you mean, Madam, said I; is it the king and the Ras you mean?"—"Call him the King, says the other woman in half a whisper; he loves the king."—"Well, aye, come, let it be the king then, says she; will the King and Ras Michael ever come to Gondar?"—"Surely, said I, the king is king, and will go to any part of his dominions he pleases, and when he pleases; do you not hear he is already on his way?"—"Aye, aye, by God, says Powuffen, no fear he'll come with a vengeance, therefore I think it is high time that I was in Begemder." He then shrugged up his shoulders, and rose, upon which I took my leave. He had kept me standing all the time; and when I came to Koscam I made my report as usual to the Iteghé, who laughed very heartily, though the king's arrival, which was prophecied, was likely to be a very serious affair to her.

THAT very day, in the evening, came a servant from Ras Michael, with taunts and severe threats to the queen, to Powussen, and Gusho; he said he was very quickly bringing the king back to Gondar, and being now old, intended to pass the rest of his life in Tigré; he, therefore, hoped they would await the king's coming to Gondar, and chuse a Ras for his successor from among themselves, as he understood they were all friends, and would easily agree, especially as it was to *oblige him*.

ON the 27th, Gusho and Powussen waited upon the queen to take their leave. They declared it was not their intention to stay at Gondar, merely to be alternately the subject of merriment and scoffing to Michael and to Fasil, and upon this they immediately set out on their way home, without drum or trumpet, or any parade whatever.

IMMEDIATELY after, arrived another servant from Fasil to the queen, desiring that Powussen and Gusho might halt at Emfras, adding, that he had just then begun his march from Buré, and would be at Gondar in a few days. Gusho and Powussen did accordingly halt there, and were detained for the space of six weeks, amused by false pretences and messages, in very uncomfortable quarters, till their armies disbanded, the soldiers, from hunger and constant rains, deserted their leaders, and went every man to his home.

IN the beginning of August the queen came to Gondar, and sat on the throne all day. She had not been there these three years, and I sincerely wished she had not gone then. It was in meditation that day to chuse a new king; she was present at that deliberation, and her intention was known

to place a son of Aylo, Joas's brother, a mere infant, upon the throne. All those that were in fear of Michael, and it was very general at that time, cried out against an infant king at such a critical period; but, old as that princess was, the desire of reigning had again returned.

UPON the return of the Iteghé that night to Koscam, Sanuda held a council of the principal officers that had remained at Gondar, and fixed upon one Welleta Girgis, a young man of about 24 years of age, who had, indeed, been reputed Yafous's son, but his low life and manners had procured him safety and liberty by the contempt they had raised in Ras Michael. His mother, indeed, was of a noble origin, but so reduced in fortune as to have been obliged to gain her livelihood by carrying jars of water for hire. The mother swore this son was begot by Yafous, and as that prince was known not to have been very nice in his choice of mistresses, or limited in their number, it was, perhaps, as likely to be true as not, that Welleta Girgis was his son. He took the name of Socinios. On the morning after, the new king came to Koscam, attended by Sanuda and his party, with guards, and all the ensigns of royalty. He threw himself at the Iteghé's feet, and begged her forgiveness if he had vindicated the rights of his birth, without her leave or participation; he declared his resolution to govern entirely by her advice, and begged her to grant his request and come to Gondar, and again take possession of her place as Iteghé, or regent of the kingdom.

It was about the 10th of August that an accident happened, which it was generally thought would have determined Fasil to come to Gondar. A common woman, wife of a  
Galla



Galla at Tchelga, a town upon the frontiers of Sennaar, being at variance with her husband, upbraided him with being the person that, with his own hand, had assassinated the late king Joas. This Galla was immediately seized and sent to Gondar, and was examined before the queen, where I was present. He, with very little hesitation, declared, That, on a night immediately after the battle of Azazo, he was sent for to Ras Michael, who gave him some money and large promises, on condition that he would undertake to murder the king that night. The persons present were Laeca Netcho, and his two sons, Nebrit Tecla and his two sons, Shalaka Becro relation to the present king, and Woldo Hawaryat a monk of Tigré. The prisoner said, he was afraid, if he should refuse, they would murder him for the sake of secrecy. He further said, that they had given him spirits to drink till he was intoxicated, and then delivered to him the keys of the apartments where Joas was confined, and they all went with him to the palace; they found the unfortunate king alone, walking in his apartment, very pensive, and, though at the late hour of twelve at night, dressed in his usual habit. Two of Laeca Netcho's sons attempted to put a cord round his neck, but the king, being young and strong, shewed a disposition to defend himself, and wrested the cord out of the murderers hands; upon which Zor Woldo (the name of the Galla) struck him a violent blow with a bludgeon on the head, which felled him to the ground: The others then, with a short cord, strangled him, the monk, Woldo Hawaryat, crying, dispatch him quickly; after this they carried the body to the neighbouring church of St Raphael, where a grave, or rather hole, was ready, into which they threw it with the clothes just as he was. The prisoner said, That, when they were carrying the king's body out of the

palace

palace into the church-yard, over a breach in the church-yard wall, they were challenged by a person, who asked them what they were about? to which they replied, Burying a stranger who died that day of a pestilential fever.

IMMEDIATELY upon this confession, the Galla was carried out and hanged upon the daroo-tree before the king's gate. Many condemned this hasty execution, but many likewise thought it prudent; for he had already named a great part of the people about the queen as accessory to the death of her son.

I HAVE said his name was Zor Woldo; he was of the race of Galla, called Toluma, on the borders of Amhara; he had been formerly a servant to Kasmati Becro; was of small stature, thin and lightly made; his complexion a yellowish black, and singularly ill-favoured. When under the tree, he acknowledged the murder of the king with absolute indifference; nor did he desire any favour, or shew any fear of death. Zor Woldo's examination and declaration were sent immediately to Fasil, who, as usual, promised to come to Gondar quickly. The body of Joas was raised also, and laid in the church (in his clothes, just as he was dug up) upon a little straw; his features were easily distinguishable, but some animal had ate part of his cheek.

THE day after, I went from Koscam to Gondar without acquainting the Iteghé, and took a Greek called Petros with me; he had been chamberlain to Joas. We went about eleven o'clock in the forenoon to the church of St Raphael, expecting to have seen many as curious as ourselves, but, by reason of the atrociousness of the act, now for the first

time known to be true, and the fear of Ras Michael threatening Gondar every day, not a living soul was there but a monk belonging to the church itself, who kept the key. It was thought criminal to know what it was apparent Michael had wished to conceal. Petros no sooner saw his master's face than, saying, It is he! he ran off with all the speed possible: for my part, I was shocked at the indecent manner in which the body was exposed; it affected me more than the murder itself, for it appeared as if it had been thrown down upon the ground, the head, arms, and legs lying in all sorts of directions, and great part of his haunch and thigh bare. I desired the monk to lock the door, and come along with me to Petros's house. Petros was a merchant who sold carpets, and such sort of goods used in the country, which he brought from Cairo. It was full an hour before we could make him behave sensibly, or deliver me a small Persian carpet, such as Mahometans use to pray upon, that is about seven feet long and four feet broad, and a web of coarse muslin, which I bought of him. I told the priest (for Petros absolutely refused to return to the church) how to lay the body decently upon the carpet, and to cover his face and every part with the muslin cloth, which might be lifted when any body came to see the corpse.

THE priest received the carpet with great marks of satisfaction, and told me it was he who had challenged the murderers when carrying the body over the wall; that he knew them well, and suspected they had been about some mischief; and, upon hearing the king was missing the next day, he was firmly convinced it was his body that had been buried. Upon going also to the place early in the morn-

ing,

ing, he had found one of the king's toes, and part of his foot, not quite covered with earth, from the haste the murderers were in when they buried him; these he had put properly out of sight, and constantly ever after, as he said, had watched the place in order to hinder the grave from being disturbed, or any other person being buried there.

ABOUT the beginning of October, Guebra Selassé, a servant of the king and one of the porters in the palace, came on a message to the queen. It was a laconic one, but very easily understood.—“Bury your boy, now you have got him; or, when I come, I will bury him, and some of his relations with him.” Joas, upon this, was privately buried. As this Selassé was a favourite of mine, who took care of my shoes when I pulled them off to go into the audience-room, I waited impatiently for this messenger's coming to my apartment, which he did late in the evening. I was alone, and he advanced so softly that I did not at first hear or know him; but, when the door was shut, he began to give two or three capers; and, pulling out a very large horn, “Drink! drink! G—d d—n! repeating this two or three times, and brandishing his horn over his head. Selassé, said I, have you lost your senses, or are you drunk? you used to be a sober man.”—“And so I am yet, says he, I have not tasted a morsel since noon; and, being tired of running about on my affairs, I am now come to you for my supper, as I am sure you'll not poison me for my master's sake, nor for my own either, and I have now enemies enough in Gondar.”—“I then asked, How is the king?”—“Did not you hear, said he—Drink!—the king told me to say this to you that you might know me to be a true messenger.” And an Irish servant of mine, opening the door in the instant, thinking it was

I that called *drink!* Selassé adroitly continued, "He knows you are curious in horns, and sent you this, desiring me first to get it filled at the Iteghé's with good red wine, which I have done; and now, Hallo! Drink! Englishman!" He then added in a whisper, when the servant had shut the door, "I'll tell it you all after supper, when the house is quiet, for I sleep here all night, and go to Tigré to-morrow morning."

THE time being come, he informed me Ras Michael and Fasil had made peace; Welleta Michael, the Ras's nephew, taken by Fasil at the battle of Limjour, had been the mediator; that the king and Michael, by their wise behaviour, had reconciled Tigré as one man, and that the Ras had issued a proclamation, remitting to the province of Tigré their whole taxes from the day they passed the Tacazzé till that time next year, in consideration of their fidelity and services; and this had been solemnly proclaimed in several places by beat of drum. The Ras declared, at the same time, that he would, out of his own private fortune, without other assistance, bear the expence of the campaign till he seated the king on his throne in Gondar. A kind of madness, he said, had seized all ranks of people to follow their sovereign to the capital; that the mountain Haramat still held out; but that all the principal friends, both of Za Menfus and Netcho, had been up with the governors of that fortress offering terms of peace and forgiveness, and desiring they would not be an obstacle in the king's way, and a hinderance to his return; but that all terms had been as yet refused; however, says he, you know the Ras as well as I, he will play them a trick some of these days, winking with his eye, and then crying out, Drink!

I ASKED him if any notice had been taken of the carpet I had procured to cover the body of Joas, and hoped it had given no umbrage. He said, "No; none at all; on the contrary, the king had said twenty kind things upon it; that he was present also when a priest told it to Ras Michael, who only observed, Yagoube, who is a stranger in this country, is shocked to see a man taken out of his grave, and thrown like a dog upon the bare floor. This was all Michael said, and he never mentioned a word on the subject afterwards;" nor did he, or the king, ever speak of it to me upon their return to Gondar.

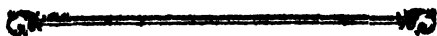
THE Iteghé, too, had much commended me, so did all the nobility, more than the thing deserved; for surely common humanity dictated thus much, and the fear of Michael, which I had not, was the only cause that so proper an action was left in a stranger's power. Even Ozoro Esther, enemy to Joas on account of the death of her husband Mariam Barea, after I had attended her one Sunday from church to the house of the Iteghé, and when she was set down at the head of a circle of all those that were of distinction at the court, called out aloud to me, as I was passing behind, and pointing to one of the most honourable seats in the room, said, Sit down there, Yagoube; God has exalted you above all in this country, when he has put it in your power, though but a stranger, to confer charity upon the king of it. All was now acclamation, especially from the ladies; and, I believe, I may safely say, I had never in my life been a favourite of so many at one time.

I DISPATCHED Guebra Selassé with a message to the king, that I was resolved now to try once more a journey to the head

head of the Nile; that I thought I should have time to be there, and return to Gondar, before the Taçazzé was fordable, soon after which I expected he would cross it, and that nothing but want of health would prevent me from joining him in Belessen, or sooner, if any opportunity should offer.

BEFORE I took my last resolutions I waited upon the queen. She was exceedingly averse to the attempt; she bade me remember what the last trial had cost me; and begged me to defer any further thoughts of it till Fasil arrived in Gondar; that she would then deliver me into his hands, and procure from him sure guides, together with a safe conduct. She bade me beware also of troops of Pagan Galla which were passing and repassing to and from his army, who, if they fell in with me, would murder me without mercy. She added, that the priests of Gojam and Damot were mortal enemies to all men of my colour, and, with a word, would raise the peasants against me. This was all true; but then many reasons, which I had weighed well, concurred to shew that this opportunity, dangerous as it was, might be the only time in which my enterprise could be practicable; for I was confident a speedy rupture between Fasil and Michael would follow upon the king's return to Gondar. I determined therefore to set out immediately without farther loss of time.

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## CHAP. VIII.

*Second Journey to discover the Source of the Nile—Favourable Turn of the King's Affairs in Tigré—We fall in with Fasu's Army at Bamba.*

THOUGH the queen shewed very great dislike to my attempting this journey at such a time, yet she did not positively command the contrary; I was prepared, therefore, to leave Gondar the 27th of October 1770, and thought to get a few miles clear of the town, and then make a long stretch the next day. I had received my quadrant, time-keeper, and telescopes from the island of Mitraha, where I had placed them after the affair of Guebra Mehedin, and had now put them in the very best order.

BUT, about twelve o'clock, I was told a message from Ras Michael had arrived with great news from Tigré. I went immediately to Koscam as fast as I could gallop, and found there Guebra Christos, a man used to bring the jars of bou-



za to Ras Michael at his dinner and supper: low men are always employed on such errands, that they may not, from their consequence excite a desire of vengeance. The message that he brought was to order bread and beer to be ready for 30,000 men who were coming with the king, as he had just decamped from before the mountain Haramat, which he had taken, and put Za Menfus to the sword, with every man that was in it: this message struck the queen with such a terror that she was not visible the whole day.

AFTER asking the messenger if he had any word from the king to me, he said, "Very little;" that the king had called him to tell me he should soon begin his march by Belessen; and that he would send for me to meet him when he should arrive at Mariam-Ohha; he told me besides, that the king had got a stone for me with writing upon it of old times, which he was bringing to me; that it had been dug up at Axum, and was standing at the foot of his bed, but that he did not order him to tell me this, and had only learned it from the servants. My curiosity was very much raised to know what this stone could be, but I soon saw it was in vain to endeavour to learn any thing from Guebra Christos; he answered in the affirmative to every inquiry: when I asked if it was blue, it was blue; and if black, it was black; it was round, and square, and oblong, just as I put my question to him: all he knew about it at last, he said, was, that it cured all sort of sickness; and, if a man used it properly, it made him invulnerable and immortal: he did not, however, pretend to warrant this himself, but swore he had the account from a priest of Axum who knew it. I was perfectly satisfied all further inquiry was unnecessary; he

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had

had got a very plentiful portion of bouza from his friends, and was, I saw, fast engaged in the pursuit of more, so I gave him a small present for his good news, and took my leave, my mind being full of reflections upon the king's goodness, who, after such an absence, and in so critical a situation as he then was, still remembered the trifling pursuits in which he had seen me often engaged.

IN the afternoon I received a message from Ozoro Esther, as brought to her by a servant of Ras Michael. It seems the giving up the king's revenue due from Tigré, and all sort of taxes upon the inhabitants, had interested the whole province so strongly, that all of them, as one man, endeavoured to remove the obstacle which stood in the way of the king's return: Michael, moreover, offered peace and pardon to the rebels, certain compensations, and an amnesty of all that was past. All the friends, both of Netcho and Za Menfus, and the other leaders upon the mountain, endeavoured to persuade them to accept the terms offered, whilst all the priests and hermits, eminent for sanctity, became as mediators between them and Ras Michael: this intercourse, though it had no effect upon Za Menfus, had seduced Netcho, and opened a large field for treachery.

IN the midst of this treaty, Kefla Yafous, with a detachment of chosen men, in a very stormy night, was appointed to ascend up a private path to that part of the mountain where Netcho kept the principal guard, and being admitted, found the garrison mostly asleep; he surprised and obliged them to surrender, with very little bloodshed; Za Menfus was taken prisoner, and, while Kefla Yafous conducted him to the camp, was met by Guebra Mascal, who thrust him through

with a lance, as a retaliation for his father's death. Netcho and the rest of the garrison being pardoned, all joined Ras Michael's army. I looked upon these news as a good omen, and experienced a degree of confidence and composure of mind to which I for a long time had been a stranger. I slept sound that night, and it was not till half after nine in the morning that I was ready for my journey.

In the evening before, I had endeavoured to engage my old companion Strates to accompany me on this attempt as he had done on the former; but the recollection of past dangers and sufferings was not yet banished from his mind; and upon my asking him to go and see the head of this famous river, he coarsely, according to his stile, answered, Might the devil fetch him if ever he sought either his head or his tail again.

It was on the 28th of October, at half past nine in the morning, that we left Gondar, and passed the river Kahha at the foot of the town; our route was W. S. W. the road a little rugged upon the side of a hill, but the day was fair, with sunshine; and a small breeze from the north had risen with the sun, and made the temperature of the air perfectly agreeable. We left the church of Ledeta about a mile on the right, and passed by several poor villages called Abba Samuel; thence we came to the small river Shimfa, then to the Dumaza, something larger. Upon the banks of this river, very pleasantly situated, is Azazo, a country-house built by the late king Yafous, who often retired here to relax himself with his friends. It is surrounded, I may say covered, with orange-trees, so as to be scarcely seen; the trees are grown very large and high; they are planted without

without order, the only benefit expected from them being the shade. At some small distance is the village Azazo, originally built for the accommodation of the king's servants while he resided there, but now chiefly occupied by monks belonging to the large church of Tecla Haimanout, which is on a little hill adjoining. Azazo, though little, is one of the most chearful and pleasant villages in the neighbourhood of Gondar. The lemon-tree seems to thrive better and grow higher than the orange; but the house itself is going fast to ruin, as the kings of this country have a fixed aversion to houses built by their predecessors.

THE Dumaza is a very clear and pleasant stream, running briskly over a small bed of pebbles: both this river and the Shimfa come from Woggora on the N. W. they pass the hill of Koscam, called Debra Tzai, join below Azazo, and, traversing the flat country of Dembea, they meet the Angrab, which passes by Gondar, and with it fall into the Tacazzè, or Athara.

At noon we passed a small rivulet called Azzargiha, and, soon after, the Chergué, where there began a most violent storm of rain, which forced us, much against our will, into the village, one of the most miserable I ever entered; it consisted of small hovels built with branches of trees, and covered with thatch of straw. These rains that fall in the latter season are what the natives very much depend upon, and without which they could not sow the latter crops; for, though it rains violently every day from May to the beginning of September, by the end of October the ground is so burnt that the country would be unfit for culture.

Our quarters here were so bad that we were impatient to depart, but came to a water just below Chergué, which quickly made us wish ourselves back in the village ; this is a torrent that has no springs in the hills, but only great basins, or reservoirs, of stone ; and, though it is dry all the year else, yet, upon a sudden, violent shower, as this was, it swells in an instant, so that it is impassable for man or horse by any device whatever. This violence is of short duration ; we waited above half an hour, and then the peasants shewed us a place, some hundred yards above, where it was shallower ; but even here we passed with the utmost difficulty, from the impetuosity of the stream, after getting all possible assistance from four people of the village ; but we stood very much in need of some check to our impatience, so eager were we to get forward and finish our journey before some revolution happened.

We had not many minutes been delivered from this torrent, before we passed two other rivers, the one larger, the other smaller. All these rivers come from the north-west, and have their sources in the mountains a few miles above, towards Woggora, from which, after a short course on the side of the hills, they enter the low, flat country of Dembea, and are swallowed up in the Tzana.

We continued along the side of the hill in a country very thinly inhabited ; for, it being directly in the march of the army, the peasants naturally avoided it, or were driven from it. Our road was constantly intersected by rivers, which abound, in the same space, more than in any other country in the world. We then came to the river Derma, the largest and most rapid we had yet met with, and

and soon after a smaller, called Ghelghel Derma. In the afternoon, at a quarter past three, we passed another river, called Gavi-Corra; these, like the others, all point as radii to the center of the lake, in which they empty themselves. A little before four o'clock we encamped on the side of the river Kemona. Upon the hill, on the other side of the river, stands the village of that name; it was full of cattle, very few of which we had seen during the fore-part of the journey; we had all that day travelled six hours and a quarter, which we computed not to exceed 14 miles: the reason of this slowness was the weight of my quadrant, which, though divided into two, required four men to carry it, tied upon bamboo, as upon two chair-poles. The time-keeper and two telescopes employed two men more. We pitched our tent on the side of the river, opposite to the village, and there passed the night.

ON the 29th of October, at seven in the morning, we left our station, the river Kemona; our direction was W. S. W. after, about an hour, we came to a church called Abba Abraham, and a village that goes by the same name; it is immediately upon the road on the left hand. At the distance of about a mile are ten or twelve villages, all belonging to the Abuna, and called Ghendi, where many of his predecessors have been buried. The low, hot, unwholesome, woody part of the Abyssinian Kolla, and the feverish, barren province of Walkayt, lay at the distance of about fourteen or sixteen miles on our right. We had been hitherto ascending a gentle rising ground in a very indifferent country, the sides of the hill being skirted with little rugged wood, and full of springs, which join as they run down to the low country of Walkayt. We saw before us a small hill called Guarré, which

which is to the south-west. At half past ten we rested under the before-mentioned hill; it stands alone in the plain, in shape like a sugar-loaf, and seems almost as regular as if it had been a work of art. At a quarter past eleven we resumed our journey, our course always nearly west south-west; we passed the small village of Bowiha, at the distance of about a mile; and, on the left, about six miles, is Gorgora, a peninsula that runs into the lake Tzana for several miles.

THERE was one of the first and most magnificent churches and monasteries of the Portuguese Jesuits, in the time of their mission to convert this country: Socinios, then king, gave them the grounds, with money for the expence; they built it with their own hands, and lined it elegantly with cedar. The king, who was a zealous Roman Catholic, chose afterwards a country-house for himself there, and encouraged them much by his presents and by his charity; it is one of the pleasantest situations in the world; the vast expanse of the lake is before you; Dembea, Gojam, and Maitsha, flat and rich countries all round, are in view; and the tops of the high hills of Begemder and Woggora close the prospect.

THE lake here, I am told, has plenty of fish, which is more than can be said for many of the other parts of it; the fish are of two kinds, both of them seemingly a species of what the English call *bream*. I never could make them to agree with me, which I attribute to the drug with which they are taken; it is of the nature of *nux vomica*, pounded in a mortar, and thrown into streams, where they run into the lake; the fish, feeding there, are thus intoxicated and taken; however, it would admit of a doubt of this being the rea-

son, because the queen and all the great people in Gondar eat them in Lent without any bad consequences.

THE great elevation of the peninsula of Gorgora makes it one of the healthiest, as well as beautiful parts of the country; for, out of this neck of land, at several different seasons of the year, the inhabitants of the flat country suffer from malignant fevers. From Gondar hither we had always been edging down to the lake.

At a quarter before noon we halted to rest upon the banks of a small river called Baha; the country was rich, and cultivated; great part of it, too, was laid out in pasture, and stocked with an immense quantity of cattle. At one o'clock we resumed our journey, going west south-west as before; we were apparently turning the north end of the lake as short as possible, to set our face due south to the country of the Agows. At a quarter before three we pitched our tents at Bab Baha, after having travelled five hours and three quarters, which we computed to be equal to twelve miles. The first part of our journey this day was not like that of the day before; the road was, indeed, rough, but led through very agreeable valleys and gentle-rising hills; it appeared, on the whole, however, that we had ascended considerably since we left Gondar.

THE country about Bab Baha is the richest in Abyssinia; this on the south, and Woggora on the north, are the two granaries that supply the rest of the kingdom. Bab Baha is a parcel of small villages, more considerable in number and strength than those at Kemona, and is near the lake Tzana. The queen and many of her relations have here their



houses and possessions, and these, therefore, being respected by Michael, had not been involved in the devastation of the late war. The villages are all surrounded with Kol-quall trees, as large at the trunk as those we met on the side of the mountain of Taranta, when we ascended it on our journey from Masuah to enter into the province of Tigré; but the tree wants much of the beauty of those of Tigré; the branches are fewer in number, less thorny, and less indented, which seems to prove that this is not the climate for them.

THE 30th of October, at six in the morning, we continued our journey from Bab Baha still rounding the lake at W. S. W. and on the very brink of it: the country here is all laid out in large meadows of a deep, black, rich soil, bearing very high grass, through the midst of which runs the river Sar-Ohha, which, in English, is the Grassy River; it is about forty yards broad and not two feet deep, has a soft clay bottom, and runs from north to south into the lake Tzana.

WE turned out of the road to the left at Bab Baha, and were obliged to go up the hill; in a quarter of an hour we reached the high road to Mescala Christos. At seven o'clock we began to turn more to the southward, our course being S. W.; three miles and a half on our right remained the village of Tenkel; and four miles and a half that of Themmera to the N. N. W.; we were now close to the border of the lake, whose bottom here is a fine sand. Neither the fear of crocodiles, nor other monsters in this large lake, could hinder me from swimming in it for a few minutes.

Though the sun was very warm, the water was intensely cold, owing to the many fresh streams that pour themselves continually into the lake Tzana from the mountains. The country here is sown with dora, which is maize, or millet; and another plant, not to be distinguished from our marigold either in size, shape, or foliage; it is called Nook\*, and furnishes all Abyssinia with oil for the kitchen, and other uses.

At a quarter past nine we rested a little at Delghi Mariam; the village called simply Delghi, adjoining to it, is but small, and on the S. W. is the hill of Goy Mariam, where the queen-mother has a house. All the habitations in this country were burnt by Ras Michael in his return to Gondar after the battle of Fagitta. The mountain Debra Tzai above Koscam, was seen this day at N. E. and by E. from us.

At a quarter past ten we again set out, our route being S. W. at eleven we left the small village Arrico, about two miles on our right. At a quarter past eleven we halted to rest our men; we passed the church of St Michael on our right, and at a quarter past one we passed two small islands in the lake, called Kedami Aret; and, half an hour after, we passed a small river, and came to Mescala Christos, a large village upon a high mountain, the summit of which it occupies entirely; it is surrounded on both sides by a river, and the descent is steep and dangerous. We thought to have staid here all night; but, after mounting the hill with great fatigue and trouble, we found the whole village abandoned, on intelligence that Waragna Fasil was on his march to Gondar, and not far distant.

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\* *Polymnia frondosa*.

THIS intelligence, which came all at once upon us, made us lay aside the thoughts of sleeping that night; we descended the hill of Mescala Christos in great haste, and with much difficulty, and came to the river Kemon below it, clear and limpid, but having little water, running over a bed of very large stones. This river, too, comes from the north-west, and falls into the lake a little below; we rested on its banks half an hour, the weather being very sultry; from this place we had a distinct view of the Nile, where, after crossing the lake, it issues out near Dara, the scene of our former misfortunes; we set it carefully by the compass, and it bore nearly S. W.

WE began our journey again at three quarters after two, and at half after three we passed a river, very clear, with little water, the name of which I have forgot; by the largeness of its bed it seemed to be a very considerable stream in winter; at present it had very little water, but a fine gravelly bottom; here we met multitudes of peasants flying before the army of Fasil, many of whom, seeing us, turned out of the way; one of these was a servant of Guebra Ehud, brother to Ayto Aylo, my most intimate friend: he told us it was very possible that Fasil would pass us that night, advised us not to linger in the front of such an army, but fall in as soon as possible with his Fit-Auraris, rather than any other of his advanced posts; he was carrying a message to his master's brother at Gondar. I told him I had rather linger in the front of such an army than in the rear of it, and should be very sorry to be detained long, even in the middle of it; that I only wished to salute Fasil, and procure a pass and recommendations from him to Agow Midre.

AYTO AYLO's servant, who was with me, presently made acquaintance with this man, and I trusted him to learn from him as much as he knew about Fasil; the result was, that Fasil pretended to be in a violent hurry, from what motive was not known; but that he, at the same time, marched very slowly, contrary to his usual custom; that his speech and behaviour promised peace, and that he had hurt nobody on the way, but proclaimed constantly, that all people should keep their houses without fear; that Ayto Woldo of Maitsha, a great robber, was his Fit-Auraris, and never distant from him more than three miles; that the troops of Agow, Maitsha, and Damot, were with him, and with some Galla of Gojam and Metchakel composed the van and center of his army, whilst his rear consisted of wild lawless Galla, whom he had brought from the other side of the Nile from Bizamo, his own country, and were commanded by Ayto Welleta Yafous, his great confident; that these Galla were half a day generally behind him, and there was some talk that, the same day, or the next, he was to send these invaders home; that he marched as if he was in fear; always took strong posts, but had received every body that came to him, either from the country or Gondar, affably and kindly enough, but no one knew any thing of his intentions.

ABOUT half past four o'clock we fell in with Woldo, his Fit-Auraris, whom I did not know. Ayto Aylo's servant, however, was acquainted with him; we asked him some questions about his master, which he answered very candidly and discreetly; on his part he made no inquiry, and seemed to have little curiosity about us; he had taken his post, and was advancing no farther that night. I made him a

little present at taking my leave, which he seemed surprised at; and, very much contrary to my expectations, had some difficulty about receiving, saying, he was ashamed that he had not any return for us; that he was a soldier, and had nothing but the lance, in his hand and the goat's skin on his shoulders, neither of which he could be sure to possess for twenty-four hours; he then told us that Fasil had, by that time, pitched his tent at Bamba, within a mile of us, and was to dispatch the wild Galla from thence to their own country: he gave us a man who, he said, would take care of us, and desired us not to dismiss him till we had seen Fasil, and not to pitch our tent, but rather to go into one of the empty houses of Bamba, as all the people had fled. We now parted equally contented with each other; at the same time I saw he sent off another man, who went swiftly on, probably to carry advice of us to Fasil: we had staid with him something less than half an hour.



## CHAP. IX.

*Interview with Fasil—Transactions in the Camp.*

**W**E found Bamba a collection of villages, in a valley now filled with soldiers. We went to the left with our guide, and got a tolerable house, but the door had been carried away. Fasil's tent was pitched a little below us, larger than the others, but without further distinction: it was easily known, however, by the lights about it, and by the nagareet, which still continued beating: he was then just alighting from his horse. I immediately sent Ayto Aylo's servant, whom I had with me, to present my compliments, and acquaint him of my being on the road to visit him. I thought now all my difficulties were over: for I knew it was in his power to forward us to our journey's end; and his servants, whom I saw at the palace near the king, when Fasil was invested with his command, had assured me, not only of an effectual protection, but also of a magnificent reception if I chanced to find him in Maitsha.

It was now, however, near eight at night of the 30th before I received a message to attend him. I repaired immediately to his tent. After announcing myself, I waited about a quarter of an hour before I was admitted; he was sitting upon a cushion with a lion's skin upon it, and another stretched like a carpet before his feet, and had a cotton cloth, something like a dirty towel, wrapped about his head; his upper cloak, or garment, was drawn tight about him over his neck and shoulders, so as to cover his hands; I bowed, and went forward to kiss one of them, but it was so entangled in the cloth that I was obliged to kiss the cloth instead of the hand. This was done either as not expecting I should pay him that compliment, (as I certainly should not have done, being one of the king's servants, if the king had been at Gondar) or else it was intended for a mark of disrespect, which was very much of a piece with the rest of his behaviour afterwards.

THERE was no carpet or cushions in the tent, and only a little straw, as if accidentally, thrown thinly about it. I sat down upon the ground, thinking him sick not knowing what all this meant; he looked steadfastly at me, saying, half under his breath, Endett nawi? bogo nawi? which, in Amharic, is, How do you do? Are you very well? I made the usual answer, Well, thank God. He again stopt, as for me to speak; there was only one old man present, who was sitting on the floor mending a mule's bridle. I took him at first for an attendant, but observing that a servant uncovered held a candle to him, I thought he was one of his Galla, but then I saw a blue silk thread, which he had about his neck, which is a badge of Christianity all over Abyssinia, and which a Galla would not wear. What he was I could

could not make out; he seemed, however, to be a very bad cobbler, and took no notice of us.

AYTO AYLO's servant, who stood behind me, pushed me with his knee, as a sign that I should speak, which I accordingly began to do with some difficulty. "I am come, said I, by your invitation, and the king's leave, to pay my respects to you in your own government, begging that you would favour my curiosity so far as to suffer me to see the country of the Agows, and the source of the Abay, or Nile, part of which I have seen in Egypt." "The source of the Abay! exclaimed he, with a pretended surprise, do you know it you are saying? Why, it is, God knows where, in the country of the Galla, wild, terrible people. The source of Abay! Are you raving! repeats he again: Are you to get there, do you think, in a twelvemonth, or more, or when?" "Sir, said I, the king told me it was near Sacala, and still nearer Geesh; both villages of the Agows, and both in your government." "And so you know Sacala and Geesh? says he, whistling and half angry\*." "I can repeat the names that I hear, said I; all Abyssinia knows the head of the Nile."—"Aye, says he, imitating my voice and manner, but all Abyssinia won't carry you there, that I promise you." "If you are resolved to the contrary, said I, they will not; I wish you had told the king so in time, then I should not have attempted it; it was relying upon you alone I came so far, confident, if all the rest of Abyssinia could not protect me there, that your word singly could do it."

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\* This affected ignorance was probably intended to bring me to mention the donation the king had given me of Geesh, which he never much relished, and made effectually useless to me.



He now put on a look of more complacency. "Look you, Yagoube, says he, it is true I can do it; and, for the king's sake who recommended it to me, I would do it; but the Acab Saat, Abba Salama, has sent to me, to desire me not to let you pass further; he says it is against the law of the land to permit Franks like you to go about the country, and that he has dreamed something ill will befall me if you go into Maitsha." I was as much irritated as I thought it possible for me to be. "So so, said I, the time of priests, prophets, and dreamers is coming on again." "I understand you, says he laughing for the first time; I care as little for priests as Michael does, and for prophets too, but I would have you consider the men of this country are not like yours; a boy of these Galla would think nothing of killing a man of your country. You white people are all effeminate; you are like so many women; you are not fit for going into a province where all is war, and inhabited by men, warriors from their cradle."

I saw he intended to provoke me; and he had succeeded so effectually that I should have died, I believe, imprudent as it was, if I had not told him my mind in reply. "Sir, said I, I have passed through many of the most barbarous nations in the world; all of them, excepting this clan of yours, have some great men among them above using a defenceless stranger ill. But the worst and lowest individual among the most uncivilized people never treated me as you have done to-day under your own roof, where I have come so far for protection." He asked, "How?" "You have, in the first place, said I, publicly called me Frank, the most odious name in this country, and sufficient to occasion me to be stoned to death without further ceremony, by any set of

men wherever I may present myself. By Frank you mean one of the Romish religion, to which my nation is as adverse as yours ; and again, without having ever seen any of my countrymen but myself, you have discovered, from that specimen, that we are all cowards and effeminate people, like, or inferior to, your boys or women. Look you, Sir, you never heard that I gave myself out as more than an ordinary man in my own country, far less to be a pattern of what is excellent in it. I am no soldier, though I know enough of war to see yours are poor proficient in that trade. But there are soldiers, friends and countrymen of mine, (one presents himself to my mind at this instant\*,) who would not think it an action in his life to vaunt of, that with 500 men he had trampled all yon naked savages into dust. On this Fasil made a feigned laugh, and seemed rather to take my freedom amiss. It was, doubtless, a passionate and rash speech. As to myself, continued I, unskilled in war as I am, could it be now without further consequence, let me but be armed in my own country-fashion on horseback, as I was yesterday, I should, without thinking myself overmatched, fight the two best horsemen you shall choose from this your army of famous men, who are warriors from their cradle; and if, when the king arrives, you are not returned to your duty, and we meet again, as we did at Limjour, I will pledge myself, with his permission, to put you in mind of this promise. This did not make things better.

He repeated the word *duty* after me, and would have replied, but my nose burst out in a stream of blood ; and, that

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instant,

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\* It is with pleasure I confess the man then in my mind was my brave friend Sir William Erskine.

instant, Aylo's servant took hold of me by the shoulder to hurry me out of the tent. Eafil seemed to be a good deal concerned, for the blood streamed out upon my clothes. The old man likewise assisted me when out of the tent; I found he was Guebra Ehud, Ayto Aylo's brother, whose servant we had met on the road. I returned then to my tent, and the blood was soon staunch'd by washing my face with cold water. I sat down to recollect myself, and the more I calmed, the more I was dissatisfied at being put off my guard; but it is impossible to conceive the provocation without having proved it. I have felt but too often how much the love of our native soil increases by our absence from it; and how jealous we are of comparisons made to the disadvantage of our countrymen by people who, all proper allowances being made, are generally not their equals, when they would boast themselves their superiors. I will confess further, in gratification to my critics, that I was, from my infancy, of a sanguine, passionate disposition; very sensible of injuries that I had neither provoked nor deserved; but much reflection, from very early life, continual habits of suffering in long and dangerous travels, where nothing but patience would do, had, I flattered myself, abundantly subdued my natural proneness to feel offences, which, common sense might teach me, I could only revenge upon myself.

HOWEVER, upon further consulting my own breast, I found there was another cause had co-operated strongly with the former in making me lose my temper at this time, which, upon much greater provocation, I had never done before. I found now, as I thought, that it was decreed decisively my hopes of arriving at the source of the Nile were for ever ended;

ended; all my trouble, all my expences, all my time, and all my sufferings for so many years were thrown away, from no greater obstacle than the whimsies of one barbarian, whose good inclinations, I thought, I had long before sufficiently secured; and, what was worse, I was now got within less than forty miles of the place I so much wished to see; and my hopes were shipwrecked upon the last, as well as the most unexpected, difficulty I had to encounter.

I was just going to bed when Ayto Welleta Michael, Ras Michael's nephew, taken at Limjour, and a prisoner with Fasil, though now at large, came into the tent. I need not repeat the discourse that passed between us, it was all condolence upon the ill-usage I had met with. He cursed Fasil, called him a thousand opprobrious names, and said, Ras Michael one day would shew me his head upon a pole: he hinted, that he thought Fasil expected a present, and imagined that I intended to pass the king's recommendation on him in the place of it. I have a present, said I, and a very handsome one, but I never thought that, while his nagareet was still beating, and when he had scarcely pitched his tent when he was tired, and I no less so, that it was then a time to open baggage for this purpose; if he had waited till to-morrow, he should have had a gratification which would have contented him.

WELL, well, said Welleta Michael, as for your journey I shall undertake for that, for I heard him giving orders about it when I came away, even though he expects no present; what does the gratifying your curiosity cost him? he would be ashamed to refuse you permission; his own vanity would hinder him. This assurance, more than all the

quieting draughts in the world, composed my mind, and brought me to myself. I went to bed, and falling into a found sleep, was waked near mid-night by two of Fasil's servants, who brought each of them a lean live sheep; they said they had brought the sheep, and were come to ask how I was, and to stay all night to watch the house for fear of the thieves in the army; they likewise brought their master's order for me to come early in the morning to him, as he wanted to dispatch me on my journey before he gave the Galla liberty to return. This dispelled every doubt, but it raised my spirits so much, that, out of impatience for morning, I slept very little more that night.

It was a time of year when it is not broad day till after six o'clock; I went to the camp and saw Guebra Ehud, who confirmed what Welleta Michael had said, and that Fasil had given orders for bringing several of his own horses for me, to choose which he was to present me with; in effect there were about twelve horses all saddled and bridled, which were led by a master-groom. I was very indifferent about these horses, having a good one of my own, and there was none of these that would in this country have brought 7l. at a market; the servant, who seemed very officious, pitched upon a bright-bay poney, the fattest of the whole, but not strong enough in appearance to carry me; he assured me, however, the horse had excellent paces, was a great favourite of Fasil's, but too *dull* and *quiet* for him, and desired me to mount him, though he had no other furniture but the wooden part of a saddle covered with thin, brown leather, and, instead of stirrups, iron rings. All the Abyssinians, indeed, ride bare-footed and legged, and put only their great toe into the iron ring, holding it betwixt their great and second

second toe, as they are afraid of being entangled by the stirrup if their horse falls, should they put their foot into it.

I CONSENTED to try him very willingly. A long experience with the Moors in Barbary put me above fear of any horse; however vicious, which I had no reason to think this was; besides, I rode always with a Barbary bridle, broad stirrups, and short stirrup-leathers, after their fashion; the bridle is known to every scholar in horsemanship, and should be used by every light-horseman or dragoon, for the most vicious horse cannot advance a yard against this bridle, when in a strong hand. I ordered the feis, or groom, to change the saddle and bridle for mine, and I had on a pair of spurs with very long and sharp rowels. I saw presently the horse did not like the bit, but that I did not wonder at; my saddle was what is called a war saddle, high behind and before, so, unless the horse fell, it was impossible to throw the rider. I had also a thick, knotty stick, or truncheon, of about three-feet long, instead of a whip, and well was it for me I was so prepared for him.

For the first two minutes after I mounted I do not know whether I was most on the earth or in the air; he kicked behind, reared before, leaped like a deer, all four off the ground; and it was some time before I recollected myself; he then attempted to gallop, taking the bridle in his teeth, but got a check which staggered him; he, however, continued to gallop; and, finding I slackened the bridle on his neck, and that he was at ease, he set off and ran away as hard as he could, flinging out behind every ten yards; the ground was very favourable, smooth, soft, and up-hill.

We

We passed the post of the Fit-Auraris like lightning, leaving him exceedingly surprised at seeing me make off with his master's horse. He was then going to the head-quarters, but said nothing at passing; we went down one hill awkwardly enough; and, when we got to a small plain and a brook below, the horse would have gone easily enough either a trot or walk up the other, but I had only to shake my stirrups to make him set off again at a violent gallop, and when he stopt he trembled all over. I was now resolved to gain a victory, and hung my upper cloak upon a tree, the attempting which occasioned a new battle; but he was obliged to submit. I then between the two hills, half up the one and half up the other, wrought him so that he had no longer either breath or strength, and I began to think he would scarce carry me to the camp.

I now found that he would walk very quietly; that a gentle touch of the spur would quicken him, but that he had not strength or inclination to gallop; and there was no more rearing or kicking up behind. I put my cloak, therefore, about me in the best manner possible, just as if it had never been ruffled or discomposed by motion, and in this manner repassing the Fit-Auraris' quarters, came in sight of the camp, where a large field sown with teff, and much watered, was in front. I went out of the road into this field, which I knew was very soft and deep, and therefore favourable for me. Coming near Fasil's tent, the horse stopt upon gently straitening the bridle, as a horse properly broke would have done, on which my servant took the saddle and bridle, and returned the groom his own.

THE poor beast made a sad figure, cut in the sides to pieces, and bleeding at the jaws; and the seis, the rascal that put me upon him, being there when I dismounted, he held up his hands upon seeing the horse so mangled, and began to testify great surprise upon the supposed harm I had done. I took no notice of this, only said, Carry that horse to your master; he may venture to ride him now, which is more than either he or you dared to have done in the morning.

As my own horse was bridled and saddled, and I found myself violently irritated, I resolved to ride to compose myself a little before another interview, for I thought this last piece of treachery, that might have cost me my legs and arms, was worse than what passed in the tent the night before; it seemed to be aimed at my life, and to put a very effectual stop to the continuing my journey. My servant had in his hand a short double-barrelled gun loaded with shot for killing any uncommon bird we might see by the way. I took the gun and my horse, and went up the side of the green hill about half way, in fair view of the camp, and considerably above it, I galloped, trotted, and made my horse perform every thing he was capable of. He was excellent in his movements, and very sufficiently trained; this the Galla beheld at once with astonishment and pleasure; they are naturally fond of horses, sufficiently perfect in the useful part of horsemanship, to be sensible of the beauty of the ornamental.

THERE was then, as there always is, a vast number of kites following the camp, which are quite familiar and live upon the carrion; choosing two gliding near me, I shot first



one on the right, then one on the left; they both fell dead on the ground; a great shout immediately followed from the spectators below, to which I seemingly paid no attention, pretending absolute indifference, as if nothing extraordinary had been done. I then dismounted from my horse, giving him and my gun to my servant, and, sitting down on a large stone, I began to apply some white paper to staunch a small scratch the first horse had given me on the leg, by rubbing it against a thorn tree: as my trowsers, indeed, were all stained with the blood of the first horse, much cut by the spur, it was generally thought I was wounded.

FASIL on this sent for me to come immediately to him; having just got up from a sleep after a whole night's debauch. He was at the door of the tent when I began riding my own horse, and, having seen the shots, ordered the kites immediately to be brought him: his servants had laboured in vain to find the hole where the ball, with which I had killed the birds, had entered; for none of them had ever seen small-shot, and I did not undeceive them. I had no sooner entered his tent than he asked me, with great earnestness, to shew him where the ball had gone through. I gave him no explanation; but, if you have really an inclination to kill me, said I, you had better do it here, where I have servants that will bury me, and tell the King and the Iteghé the kind reception you have given strangers whom they have recommended. He asked what I meant? What was the matter now? and I was going to answer, when Welleta Michael told him the whole story, greatly in my favour, indeed, but truly and plainly as to the trick about the horse. The Fit-Auraris Woldo said something to him in Galla, which plainly made the matter worse. Fasil now seemed in

a terrible fury, and said three words to the Fit-Auraris in Galla, who immediately went out ; and, as my servants told me afterwards, after sending for the feis, or groom, who had brought me the horse, the first salutation that he gave him was a blow over the head with a bludgeon, which felled him to the ground, then a dozen more strokes, and ordered him to be put in irons, after which he returned into the tent.

FASIL, who heard I was hurt, and saw the quantity of blood upon my trowsers, held up his hands with a shew of horror and concern, which plainly was not counterfeited : he protested, by every oath he could devise, that he knew nothing about the matter, and was asleep at the time; that he had no horses with him worth my acceptance, except the one that he rode, but that any horse known to be his, driven before me, would be a passport, and procure me respect among all the wild people whom I might meet, and for that reason only he had thought of giving me a horse. He repeated his protestations that he was innocent, and heartily sorry for the accident, which, indeed, he appeared to be: he told me the groom was in irons, and that, before many hours passed, he would put him to death. I was perfectly satisfied with his sincerity. I wished to put an end to this disagreeable conversation: "Sir, said I, as this man has attempted my life, according to the laws of the country, it is I that should name the punishment." "It is very true, replied Fasil, take him, Yagoube, and cut him in a thousand pieces, if you please, and give his body to the kites." "Are you really sincere in what you say, said I, and will you have no after excuses." He swore solemnly he would not. "Then, said I, I am a Christian: the way my religion teaches me to punish my enemies is

by doing good for evil; and therefore I keep you to the oath you have sworn, and desire my friend the Fit-Auraris to set the man at liberty, and put him in the place he held before, for he has not been undutiful to you."

I NEED not say what were the sentiments of the company upon the occasion; they seemed to be most favourable to me; old Guebra Ehud could not contain himself, but got out of the dark corner, and squeezed both of my hands in his; and turning to Fasil, said, "Did not I tell you what my brother Aylo thought about this man?" Welleta Michael said, "He was just the same all through Tigre." Fasil, in a low voice, replied, "A man that behaves as he does may go thro' any country." They then all begged that I would take care of my wound, looking at the blood upon my trowsers. I told them it was already staunched; and turning to Fasil, said, "We white people, you see, are not so terrified at seeing our own blood as you supposed we were." He then desired that the tent might be cleared for a short time, and we all went out.

ABOUT ten minutes after, I was called in to partake of a great breakfast; honey and butter, and raw beef in abundance, as also some stewed dishes that were very good. I was very hungry, having tasted nothing since dinner the day before; and I had had much exercise of body as well as of mind. We were all very cheerful, every one saying something about the Agows, or of the Nile; and Fasil declaring, if it was peace, he would carry me to his country across the Nile as far as the kingdom of Narea. I thanked him. "You are at peace, said I, with the King and the Ras, and going to meet them at Gondar."—"At Gondar, says he, no; I hope not this

this time ; the Ras has work enough on his hands for the rest of his life." "What work ? said I." "Why, the mountain," replies he." "The mountain Aromata!" "The same, says he; you never saw such a place; Lamalmon, and all the mountains of Abyssinia, are nothing to it: he was, when at the prime of life, fifteen years in taking it from this Netcho's father." "But he has been luckier this time, replied I, by fourteen years." "How!" says he, with some amazement." "Pardon me, said I, if I have unawares told you unwelcome news; but the mountain is taken, the garrison put to the sword, and Za Menfus, after surrendering, slain, in cold blood by Guebra Mascall, in revenge for the death of his father." Fasil had in his hand a blue cut-glass goblet, gilt round the edges with gold. I had bought it at Cairo, with several other articles of the same kind, from a merchant who procured them from Trieste. I had given it to the king, who drank out of it himself, and had sent it as an honourable token to Fasil from Dingleber, the day when they made peace, after the battle of Limjour. Upon hearing what I said, he threw it violently upon the ground, and broke it into a thousand pieces. "Take care what you say, Yagoube, says he, take care this be not a lie; tell it me again." I told him the whole circumstances from beginning to end; how the news had come to the Iteghé—who had brought the intelligence—how it had come from the Ras to Ozoro Esther—and how Kessa Yafous had surprised the mountain by treachery, having first lulled the besieged asleep by a negotiation, and a proposed mediation of the priests and hermits. On this Fasil observed, it was the very way Michael took it last time; and, putting his forefinger in his mouth, bit it very hard, crying, Fool, fool, was he not warned? We all were again dismissed from the tent, and staid

out about a quarter of an hour, when we were again called in.

I CANNOT say but I enjoyed heartily the fright I had visibly given him ; it seemed to me that Aylo's brother, Guebra Ehud, was the only person whom he consulted, for it was he alone that remained with him in his tent when we entered ; he had changed his dress ; a man was combing his hair, and perfuming it ; and he had a new, white, fine cotton cloth thrown about his middle loosely, which covered his legs and feet, his breasts, neck, and shoulders, being quite naked ; he rose half up from his seat when I came in, made me sit down on a cushion beside him, and was going to speak, when I resolved to have the first word, for fear he should engage me in more discussions. "Your continual hurry, said I, all the times I have seen you, has put it out of my power till now to make you the acknowledgment it is ordinary for strangers to present when they visit great men in their own country, and ask favours of them." I then took a napkin, and opened it before him ; he seemed to have forgot the present altogether, but from that moment I saw his countenance changed, he was like another man. "O Yagoube, says he, a present to me ! you should be sensible that is perfectly needless ; you were recommended to me by the King and the Ras ; you know, says he, we are friends, and I would do twenty times as much for yourself without recommendation from either ; besides, I have not behaved to you like a great man."

It was not a very hard thing to conquer these scruples ; he took the several pieces of the present one by one in his hands, and examined them ; there was a crimson silk tash,

made at Tunis, about five yards long, with a silk fringe of the same colour; it was as beautiful a web of silk as ever I saw; it had a small waved pattern wrought in it; the next was a yellow, with a red narrow border, or stripe, and a silver-wrought fringe, but neither so long nor so thick as the other; the next were two Cyprus manufactured shawls, silk and cotton, with a fawn stripe, the one broader than the other, but five yards long each; the next was a Persian pipe, with a long pliable tube, or worm, covered with Turkey leather, with an amber mouth-piece, and a crystal vase for smoking tobacco through water, a great luxury in the eastern countries; the next were two blue bowls, as fine as the one he had just then broken, and of the same sort. He shoved them from him, laughing, and said, "I will not take them from you, Yagoube; this is downright robbery; I have done nothing for this, which is a present for a king."—"It is a present to a friend, said I, often of more consequence to a stranger than a king; I always except your king, who is the stranger's best friend."—"Though he was not easily disconcerted, he seemed, at this time, to be very nearly so."—"If you will not receive them, continued I, such as they are offered, it is the greatest affront ever was put upon me; I can never, you know, receive them again."

By this he was convinced. More feeble arguments would indeed have satisfied him, and he folded up the napkin with all the articles, and gave them to an officer; after which the tent was again cleared for consultation; and, during this time, he had called his man of confidence, whom he was to send with us, and instructed him properly. I saw plainly that I had gained the ascendant; and, in the expectation of Ras Michael's speedily coming to Gondar, he was as willing to

to be on his journey the one way, as I was the other. I had ordered my servants and baggage to set out on the road to Dingleber before me, sending Ayto Aylo's servant along with them, leaving me only my horse and a common Abyssinian servant to follow them: all had been ready since early in the morning, and they had set out accordingly with very great alacrity.

It was about one o'clock, or after it, when I was admitted to Fasil: he received me with great complacency, and would have had me sit down on the same cushion with himself, which I declined. "Friend Yagoube, says he, I am heartily sorry that you did not meet me at Buré before I set out; there I could have received you as I ought, but I have been tormented with a multitude of barbarous people, who have turned my head, and whom I am now about to dismiss. I go to Gondar in peace, and to keep peace there, for the king on this side the Tacazzé has no other friend than me; Powussen and Gusho are both traitors, and so Ras Michael knows them to be. I have nothing to return you for the present you have given me, for I did not expect to meet a man like you here in the fields; but you will quickly be back; we shall meet on better terms at Gondar; the head of the Nile is near at hand; a horseman, express, will arrive there in a day. I have given you a good man, well known in this country to be my servant; he will go to Geesh with you, and return you to a friend of Ayto Aylo's and mine, Shalaka Welled Amiac; he has the dangerous part of the country wholly in his hands, and will carry you safe to Gondar; my wife is at present in his house: fear nothing, I shall answer for your safety: When will you set out? to-morrow?"

I REPLIED, with many thanks for his kindness, that I wished to proceed immediately, and that my servants were already far off, on the way. You are going to dismiss those wild people, I would wish to be as clear of them as possible; I intend to travel long journies, till we part (as I understand we shall do) from the rout that they are taking.

You are very much in the right, says Fasil, it was only in the idea that you was hurt with that accursed horse that I would have wished you to stay till to-morrow; but throw off these bloody clothes, they are not decent, I must give you new ones, you are my vassal. I bowed. The king has granted you Geesh, where you are going, and I must invest you. A number of his servants hurried me out; Guebra Ehud, Wellela Michael, and the Fit-Auraris, attended me. I presently threw off my trowsers, and my two upper garments, and remained in my waistcoat; these were presently replaced by new ones, and I was brought back in a minute to Fasil's tent, with only a fine loose muslin under garment or cloth round me, which reached to my feet. Upon my coming back to the tent, Fasil took off the one that he had put on himself new in the morning, and put it about my shoulders with his own hand, his servants throwing another immediately over him, saying at the same time to the people, "Bear witness, I give to you, Yagoubc, the Agow Geesh, as fully and freely as the king has given it me." I bowed and kissed his hand, as is customary for feudatories, and he then pointed to me to sit down.

"HEAR what I say to you, continued Fasil; I think it right for you to make the best of your way now, for you will be the sooner back at Gondar. You need not be alarmed



at the wild people you speak of, who are going after you, tho' it is better to meet them coming this way, than when they are going to their homes; they are commanded by Wellem Yafous, who is your friend, and is very grateful for the medicines you sent him at Gondar: he has not been able to see you, being so much busied with those wild people; but he loves you, and will take care of you, and you must give me more of that physic when we met at Gondar." I again bowed, and he continued,—“Hear me what I say; you see those seven people (I never saw more thief-like fellows in my life),—these are all leaders and chiefs of the Galla—savages, if you please; they are all your brethren.” I bowed. “You may go through their country as if it were your own, without a man hurting you: you will be soon related to them all; for it is their custom that a stranger of distinction, like you, when he is their guest, sleeps with the sister, daughter, or near relation of the principal men among them. I dare say, says he archly, you will not think the customs of the Galla contain greater hardships than those of Amhara.” I bowed, but thought to myself I shall not put them to the trial. He then jabbered something to them in Galla which I did not understand. They all answered by the wildest howl I ever heard, and struck themselves upon the breast, apparently assenting.

“WHEN Ras Michael, continued he, came from the battle of Fagitta, the eyes of forty-four, brethren and relations of these people present, were pulled out at Gondar, the day after he arrived, and they were exposed upon the banks of the river Angrab to starve, where most, I believe, were devoured by the hyæna; you took three of them up to your house; nourished, cloathed, protected, and kindly treated them.” “They are now in good health, said I, and want nothing

nothing: the Iteghé will deliver them to you. The only other thing I have done to them was, I got them baptised: I do not know if that will displease them; I did it as an additional protection to them, and to give them a title to the charity of the people of Gondar." "As for that, says he, they don't care the least about baptism; it will neither do them good nor harm; they don't trouble themselves about these matters; give them meat and drink, and you will be very welcome to baptise them all from morning to night; after such good care these Galla are all your brethren, they will die for you before they see you hurt." He then said something to them in Galla again, and they all gave another assent, and made a shew of kissing my hand.

THEY sat down; and, I must own, if they entertained any good-will to me, it was not discernible in their countenances. "Besides this, continued Isail, you was very kind and courteous to my servants while at Gondar, and said many honourable things of me before the king; you sent me a present also, and above all, when Joas my master's body was dug up from the church-yard of St Raphael, and all Gondar were afraid to shew it the least respect, dreading the vengeance of Ras Michael, you, a stranger, who had never seen him, nor received benefit from him, at your own expence paid that attention to his remains which would have better become many at Gondar, and me in particular, had I been within reach, or had intelligence of the matter: now, before all these men, ask me any thing you have at heart, and, be it what it may, they know I cannot deny it you." He delivered this in a tone and gracefulness of manner, superior, I think, to any thing I had ever before seen, although the Abyssinians are all orators, as, indeed, are most barbarians.

"Why then, said I, by all those obligations you are pleased to mention, of which you have made a recital so truly honourable to me, I ask you the greatest favour that man can bestow upon me—send me, as conveniently as possible, to the head of the Nile, and return me and my attendants in safety, after having dispatched me quickly, and put me under no constraint that may prevent me from satisfying my curiosity in my own way." "This, says he, is no request, I have granted it already; besides, I owe it to the commands of the king, whose servant I am. Since, however, it is so much at your heart, go in peace, I will provide you with all necessaries. If I am alive, and governor of Damot, as you are, we all know, a prudent and sensible man, unsettled as the state of the country is, nothing disagreeable can befall you."

He then turned again to his seven chiefs, who all got up, himself and I, Guebra Khud, Welleta Michael, and the Fit-Auraris; we all stood round in a circle, and raised the palm of our hands, while he and his Galla together repeated a prayer about a minute long; the Galla seemingly with great devotion. Now, says Fafil, go in peace, you are a Galla; this is a curse upon them, and their children, their corn, grafs, and cattle, if ever they lift their hand against you or yours, or do not defend you to the utmost, if attacked by others, or endeavour to defeat any design they may hear is intended against you." Upon this I offered to kiss his hand before I took my leave, and we all went to the door of the tent, where there was a very handsome grey horse bridled and saddled. "Take this horse, says Fafil, as a present from me; it is not so good as your own, but, depend upon it, it is not of the kind that rascal gave you in the morning; it is the

the horse which I rode upon yesterday, when I came here to encamp; but do not mount it yourself, drive it before you saddled and bridled as it is; no man of Maitsha will touch you when he sees that horse; it is the people of Maitsha whose houses Michael has burnt that you have to fear, and not your friends the Galla.

I THEN took the most humble and respectful leave of him possible, and also of my new-acquired brethren the Galla, praying inwardly I might never see them again. I recommended myself familiarly and affectionately to the remembrance of Welleta Michael, the Ras's nephew, as well as Guebra Ehud; and turning to Fasil, according to the custom of the country to superiors, asked him leave to mount on horseback before him, and was speedily out of sight. Shalaka Woldo (the name of my guide) did not set out with me, being employed about some affairs of his own, but he presently after followed, driving Fasil's horse before him.





## CHAP. X.

*Leave Bamba, and continue our Journey southward—Fall in with Fasil's Pagan Galla—Encamp on the Kelti.*

AT Bamba begins a valley full of small hills and trees, all brush-wood, none of them high enough for timber. On the right hand of the valley the hills slope gently up, the ground is firm, and grass short like sheep pasture; the hills on the left are steeper and more craggy, the lower part of the valley had been cleared of wood, and sown with different sorts of grain, by the industry of the inhabitants of the village of that name—industry that had served them to very little purpose, as the encampment of this wild army destroyed in one night every vestige of culture they had bestowed upon it.

SHALAKA WOLDO was not, to all appearance, a man to protect a stranger in the middle of a retreating army, disbanded

ed as this was, and returning to very distant countries, perhaps never to be assembled again; yet this man was chosen by one that perfectly knew he was above all others capable of the trust he had reposed in him; he was about 55 years of age, was by birth an Agow, and had served Fasil's father from his infancy, when Kasmati Eshté succeeded to the government of Damot, upon old Fasil's death\*; he had been his servant likewise, as had young Fasil, so they were both at one time fellow-domestics of Kasmati Eshté.

When Fasil had slain this nobleman, and succeeded to his father's government of Damot, Shalaka Woldo was taken into his service as an old servant of his father; it seemed his merit had not entitled him to further advancement; he had no covering on his head, except long, bushy, black hair, which just began to be mingled with grey, but no beard, the defect of all his countrymen. He had a cotton cloth thrown about his shoulders in many different ways, occasionally as his fancy suggested to him; but, unless at night, laid it generally upon one of the mules, and walked himself, his body naked, his shoulders only covered with a goat's skin in form of what the women call a tippet; he had also a pair of coarse cotton trowsers that reached to the middle of his thigh, and these were fastened at the waistband by a coarse cotton sash, or girdle, which went six or seven times about his waist, and in which he stuck a crooked knife, the blade about ten inches long and three inches where broadest, which was the only weapon he wore, and served him to cut his meat, rather than for any wea-

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The person here called Old Fasil, is Kasmati Waragna, in the time of Y. C. 11.

pon of offence or defence; for a man of consequence, as he was, could not suppose a possibility of danger while he was in the territory of his master. Sometimes he had a long pipe in his hand, being a great smoker; at other times, a stick of about three feet long, something thicker than one's thumb, with which he dealt about him very liberally, either to man, woman, or beast, upon the slightest provocation; he was bare-legged and footed, and without any mule, but kept up with us easily at whatever pace we went. With all this he was exceedingly sagacious and cunning, and seemed to penetrate the meaning of our discourse, though spoke in a language of which he did not understand a syllable.

As for Shalaka Welled Amiae, he was a man whom I shall hereafter mention as having been recommended to me by Ayto Aylo soon after my coming to Gondar. I did not, however, choose to let Fasil know of his connection, for fear he might lead him to some gainful imposition for his own account in the course of my journey through Maitsha.

At a quarter past two o'clock of the 31<sup>st</sup> of October we halted for a little on the banks of the river Chergus, a small and not very rapid stream, which coming from the south-west, runs N. E. and loses itself in the lake Tzana. At three o'clock in the afternoon we passed the small river of Dingleber, and in a quarter of an hour after came to a village of that name situated upon the top of a rock, which we ascended; here the road comes close to the end of the lake, and between it and the rock is a very narrow pass through which all provisions from the Agows and Maitsha must go; before, there is any disturbance in the south part

of the kingdom, this pass is always occupied to reduce Gondar to famine.

THE village itself belongs to the office of Betwudet, and, since that office has been discontinued, it makes part of the revenue of the Ras ; the language here is Falatha, though only used now by the Jews who go by that name : it was anciently the language of all the province of Dembea, which has here its southern boundary. The air of Dingleber is excellent, and the prospect one of the most beautiful in Abyssinia ; on the one side you have a distinct view of the lake Tzana and all its islands ; on the north, the peninsula of Gorgora, the former residence of the Jesuits, where too are the ruins of the king's palace. On the north of the lake you have a distant prospect of Dara, and of the Nile crossing that lake, preserving distinctly the tract of its stream unmixed with the rest of the water, and issuing out to form what is called the second cataract at Alata, all places fixed in our mind by the memory of former distresses. On the south-east, we have a distant view of the flat country of Mairtha, for the most part covered with thick trees, and black like a forest ; farther on the territory of Sacala, one of the districts of the Agews, near which are the fountains of the Nile, the object of all my wishes ; and close behind this, the high mountains of Amid Amid, which surrounded them in two semicircles like a new moon, or amphitheatre, and seem by their shape to deserve the name of mountains of the moon, such as was given by antiquity to mountains, in the neighbourhood of which the Nile was supposed to rise.



AT Dingleber I overtook my servants, who were disposed to stop there for that night. They had been very much oppressed by troops of wild Galla, who never having seen white men, could not refrain indulging a troublesome curiosity, without indeed doing any harm, or shewing any signs of insolence; this, however, did not hinder my servants from being terrified, as neither I nor any protector was near them. I resolved to avoid the like inconvenience, by proceeding further, as I knew the next day the main body of these savages would be up with us at Dingleber; and I rather wished to be at the point where our two roads separated, than pass a whole day in such company. It is true, I was under no sort of apprehension, for I perceived Fasil's horse driven before us commanded all necessary respect, and Zor Woldo had no occasion to exert himself at all.

AT four o'clock in the afternoon we left Dingleber, and at seven passed a great river; at eight in the evening we crossed two inconsiderable streams, and came to a collection of small villages, called Degwassa: here we entered into some narrow defiles between mountains, covered to the very top with herbage, and brushwood; it was a delightful night, and we were resolved to make the most of it. On every side of us we heard Guinea fowls, of which the woods here are full. At half past nine we halted a little, just leaving the narrow passes, and entering upon the plain. The district is called Sankraber. I found myself exceedingly fatigued, and slept a good half hour upon the ground.

AT half past ten we began our journey anew, passing immediately the small village of Wainadega, famous for the decisive battle fought between king Claudius and the Moor

Gragnè, where the latter was slain, and an end, for a time, put to the most disastrous war that ever Abyssinia was engaged in. At half after eleven we passed Guanguera on our left hand; it is a collection of many villages, at about ten miles distance; and at mid-night we had Degwassa on our right, and Guanguera on our left. At half past twelve we again rested at the side of a small river, of which I know not the name: we were now in the flat country of Maitsha, descending very gently southward. At three quarters past one in the morning of the first of November I alighted at two small villages, whose huts were but just finished, about 500 yards from the two trees that were in the front of our army, when, after passing the Nile at that dangerous ford near the Jemma, we offered Fasil battle at Limjour, which was the place we were now again come to, but in better health and spirits than before.

SHALAKA WOEDO, upon my observing to him that I was happy to see the people again raising their houses which Michael had destroyed, said, with a barbarous kind of smile, "Aye, and so am I too; for if those two villages had not been built, we should have had no fire-wood at Kelti to-night;" by which he meant, that the Galla, who were behind him, and whose next station was the banks of the river Kelti, would pull down all the new-built houses, in order to carry fire-wood along with them; and indeed we saw traces of some houses which had been newly built, and still as newly destroyed, the wood of which, partly kindled, and partly lying on the ground, served us for our fire that night at Kelti. I found myself exceedingly indisposed, and could scarcely force on a couple of hours further, when we came to the

banks of the river Kelti, at a quarter after six in the morning.

THE Kelti here is a large river; at the ford it was four feet deep, though now the dry season: it is here called the Kelti Branti, because some miles higher up it is joined by a considerable river called the Branti, which rises to the westward in the high lands of the Agow's Quaquera, and both these streams, when united, fall into the Nile a little below. The banks of this river are exceedingly steep and dangerous, the earth loose, falling in great lumps down into the stream; it is a red bole of a soapy quality; the bottom, too, and the ascent on the other side are soft; the water, though troubled and muddy, is sweet and well-tasted. We saw lights and fires on the opposite bank, and had begun to unloose the tent, when we received a message by two Galla on foot, armed with lances and shields, that we should not encamp there, as our horses and mules would probably be stolen, but desiring us to pass the river forthwith, and pitch our tent among them.

I ASKED Shalaka Woldo who these were? He said, they were an advanced post of Welleta Yafous, who had taken up that ground for the head-quarters to-morrow; that they were all Galla, under a famous partisan, a robber, called the *Jumper*; and, by the bye, he added, speaking softly in my ear, that there was not a greater thief or more daring in all the country of the Galla. I paid him my compliments upon the judicious choice he had made of a companion and a protector for us: to which, he answered, laughing, The better, the better; you shall see how it is the better. As it was necessary to load the mules again, the tent and

and baggage having been taken off before we could pass the river, we all set to work with very ill will, being excessively fatigued with a long journey and want of sleep. No sooner had Shalaka Woldo perceived this, than by two whistles upon his fingers, and a yell, he brought above fifty people to our assistance ; the baggage was passed in one moment, and in another my two tents were pitched ; which is a work these people are very dexterous at, and well acquainted with.

As soon as we had encamped, we found that the reason we were not left alone on the other side of the river was, that those of the Galla who returned pulled down all the villages for fire-wood, and plundered the houses, though they were Galla like themselves, and of Fasil's party ; and these again, driven from their houses, robbed of all they had except their lance and shield, followed the stragglers, and wreaked their vengeance upon those whom they could surprise, or were not too numerous for them.

I WAS scarcely laid down to sleep, when a servant, and with him Zor Woldo, were sent to me from the Jumper : they brought us a bull of an enormous size, but not very fat ; though we were all pretty keen in point of appetite, the stock of provision sent us seemed to defy our utmost endeavours, but we were sure of assistants enough ; so the bull was immediately killed and skinned. In the mean time, I took a short, but very refreshing sleep, being resolved to resume my journey with the same diligence till we had got to the point where we might separate from the army, which is at a place called Roo, where a large market is kept by the Agows, in whose country it is, and resorted to by all the neighbouring inhabitants.

ABOUT ten o'clock I waited upon our commander in chief the Jumper; he seemed very much embarrassed at the visit, was quite naked, having only a towel about his loins, and had been washing himself in the Kelti, to very little purpose as I thought, for he was then rubbing his arms and body over with melted tallow; his hair had been abundantly anointed before, and a man was then finishing his head-dress by plaiting it with some of the long and small guts of an ox, which I did not perceive had ever been cleaned; and he had already put about his neck two rounds of the same, in the manner of a necklace, or rather a solitaire, one end of them hanging down to the pit of his stomach. Our conversation was neither long nor interesting; I was overcome with the disagreeable smell of blood and carrion: he did not understand one word of Amharic, Geez, or any other language but Galla; he asked no questions, and shewed no sort of curiosity. Woldo, on the other hand, informed himself from him of every thing he wanted to know.

THIS Jumper was tall and lean, very sharp faced, with a long nose, small eyes and prodigious large ears; he never looked you in the face, but was rolling his eyes constantly round and round, and never fixing them upon any thing: he resembled very much a lean keen greyhound; there was no sternness nor command in his countenance, but a certain look that seemed to express a vacant or stupid mind, like that of an idiot. With this he was on all hands to be the most cruel, merciless murderer and spoiler of all the Galla. He was very active on horseback, and very indifferent about food or sleep. I made him a small present, which he took with great indifference; only told Woldo, that if I meant it to pay for the bull he had sent me, it was

was needless, for it was given me by Fasil's order, and cost him nothing.

THERE we learned, that on our way we should meet a party of about 200 men, who had been sent by Fasil to take possession of a post before we came to Roo, lest, having intelligence of us, some of the Maitsha people, whose houses had been destroyed, might follow us when we were parted from the army. The jumper told us that his brother had the command of that party, that they were all Galla of Fasil's own nation, under his brother, who was called the Lamb, and who was just such a murderer and robber as himself. I was just rising to go out of his tent when Zor Woldo, who was sitting behind me, informed me, there were news from Gondar. I asked him how he knew that? He said, he heard the people say so from without. A sudden trepidation now seized me, as I was afraid of some new trick, or obstacle, which might impede the journey, the accomplishment of which I so much longed for.

UPON going towards my tent I was met by Strates, and another Greek, with a servant of Ozoro Esther, with whom I was well acquainted: they had left Fasil at Bamba, whose wild Galla were not yet all dismissed, and he himself seemed not determined whether he should go to Gondar or not. They told me that all was in confusion at Gondar; that Gusho of Amhara, and Powussen of Begemder, had been there, and brought some trifle of money, for a mere pretence, to that wretch Socinios, whom the Iteghé unadvisedly had consented to make king; having called Fasil, Gusho, and Powussen together to reconcile them, that, united, they might attack Michael. The queen herself had been reconciled to Socinios, who

who led the life of a drunkard, a ruffian, and a profligate, but her chief fears were that Michael should return, the probability of which increased daily.

As for Fasil, he had hitherto answered the queen's invitation to Gondar evasively, sometimes by complaining that Gusfo and Powussen had come to Gondar before him, and that Gusfo was made Ras; at other times sending peremptorily to them to leave Gondar, and return to their provinces, or he would burn the town about their ears: and the last message, the day before they left the capital was, that he was then on his march towards Gondar, and consented to Gusfo and Powussen's staying; but as these two chiefs had great reason to suspect that he was in correspondence with the king and Ras Michael in Tigré, as it was known to them that he had fomented disturbances both in Begemder and Amhara, they had gone with Socinios to Koscam, without drums beating, or any sort of parade whatever, and, after taking leave, had the next day set out to their respective provinces. Upon another message from Fasil, they had agreed to return to Gondar, and leave their army at Emfras; but their troops, finding themselves so near, had disbanded, and returned to their homes, leaving Gusfo and Powussen attended only by their household servants, who, finding themselves in danger, and that Fasil was actually advancing secretly, left Gondar and separated.

OZORO ESTHER's servant (Guebra Mariam) likewise told me, that Michael, as he believed, waited for nothing but some arrangement with Fasil, for that he had no enemy remaining on the east of the Tacazzé; that his intention was to return by the way of Lasta, not willing to risk the many  
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difficult

difficult passages in Woggora, a country full of hardy troops, inveterate enemies to the kas, and where Ayto Tesfos of Samen had occupied all the defiles, and was resolved to dispute every post with him; it was well known, however, that the passes through the mountain of Lasta, were more dangerous and difficult than those of Woggora and Lamalmon; in a word, Guigarr, chief of the clan of Lasta (called Waag) possessed a strong-hold in those mountains, where many an Abyssinian army had perished, and where it was absolutely impossible to proceed but with the consent and connivance of that clan, or tribe; and tho' this Guigarr had been Michael's enemy ever since the war of Mariam Barea, peace was now concluded between them, the Ras having set Guigarr's brother at liberty, who had been some time a prisoner, and was taken in an incursion which the people of Waag had made into Tigré: excepting this pass in the mountains of Lasta, all the ground was even from thence to Tigré; the territory of Gouliou, indeed, through which the army was to march for four days, was very ill-provided with water; it was inhabited by Galla, whom Michael had suffered to settle there, to be as a barrier between Tigré, Lasta, and Begemder; but this clan was perfectly at his command, so all was easy and secure if Guigarr only remained faithful.

After giving time to Guebra Mariam to refresh himself, I took him alone into the tent to hear Ozoro Esther's message: she had been ailing after my leaving Gondar, had had a slow fever, which very much affected her nerves, and was now alarmed at a symptom which was but the effect of weakness, startling, or involuntary contraction of her legs and arms, or a kind of convulsion, which frequently awakened her out of her sleep. This she thought was a sure fore-



forerunner of death; and adjured me, by every claim of friendship that she had upon me, to return ere it would be too late. She, moreover, pledged herself that her nephew, Aylo of Gojam, should immediately carry me to the head of the Nile the moment she was recovered. Upon closer interrogation, I found that, being abandoned as it were entirely to Fasil's discretion, by the retreat of Gusho and Powassen her friends, and the absence of her husband Ras Michael, she dreaded falling into the hands of Fasil, who, she well knew, was acquainted how active she had been in instigating Michael to avenge the blood of her late husband Mariam Barea, by the effusion of that of every Galla unfortunate enough to fall into his hands. Besides, the part her mother the Iteghé had acted in settling that wretch Socinios upon the throne, gave her the very best-founded apprehensions that Michael's resentment would have no bounds; and he had declared so by frequent messages, (the last a very brutal one) that he would hang Socinios, and her mother the Iteghé, with their heads downmost, upon the same tree, before the king's house, the very day that he entered Gondar. It was well known, besides, to his wife Ozoro Esther, and to the whole kingdom, that his performance upon these occasions never fell short of his threatnings. From all this, and a great sensibility of mind, Ozoro Esther, worn out by her late sickness, and by want of sleep, exercise, and nourishment, had fallen into a very dangerous situation, and of a very difficult cure, even though the cause was perfectly known.

I SHALL not trouble the reader with what passed in my mind at this juncture. I do believe the pursuit I was then engaged in was the only one which I would not have instantly abandoned upon such a summons. Besides the sin-

cere attachment I had myself to her, as one of the most lovely and amiable women in the world; she was the mother of my most intimate friend Ayto Confu, and the wife of Ras Michael, over whom she had every day more and more influence, and I had long suspected that the young king, my constant benefactor, had contracted a decided tenderness for her. To have returned, would have been nothing had the danger or trouble been much greater; but it was obviously impossible another opportunity should offer: the country was now on the point of being plunged into a degree of disorder greater than that which had occasioned the retreat of the king to Tigré. I therefore resolved to run the risk of continuing for a time under the imputation of the foulest and basest of all sins, that of ingratitude to my benefactors; and I am confident, had it been the will of heaven that I had died in that journey, the consideration of my lying with apparent reason under that imputation would have been one of the most bitter reflections of my last moments. Having, therefore, taken my resolution, I acquainted Guebra Mariam that an immediate return was absolutely impossible; but that I should endeavour, with the utmost of my power, to make a speedy one; in the mean time, I sent word to the Greek priest (who was a sort of physician) how he was to proceed in the interim during my absence.

We had now left Maiffa by crossing the river Kelti. I shall only add, to what I have already said, that it is a very fruitful country, but so flat that the water with difficulty runs off after the tropical rains, and this occasions its being for several months unhealthy. Several tribes of Galla, from the south of the Nile, were settled here by Yafous the Great,

and his son David, as a defence for the rich countries of the Agows, Damot, Gojam, and Dembea, against the desolations and inroads of the wild Galla their countrymen, from whom they had revolted; they consist of ninety-nine families; and it is a common saying among them, that the devil holds the hundredth part for his own family, as there is nowhere else to be found a family of men equal to any of the ninety-nine. It has been sometimes connected with Gojam, oftener with Damot and the Agows, who were at this time under the government of Fasil.

THE houses in Maitsha are of a very singular construction: the first proprietor has a field, which he divides into three or four, as he pleases, (suppose four) by two hedges made of the thorny branches of the acacia-tree. In the corner, or intersection of the two hedges, he begins his low hut, and occupies as much of the angle as he pleases. Three other brothers, perhaps, occupy each of the three other angles; behind these their children place their house, and inclose the end of their father's by another, which they make generally shorter than the first, because broader. After they have raised as many houses as they please, they surround the whole with a thick and almost impenetrable abatis, or thorny hedge, and all the family are under one roof, ready to assist each other on the first alarm; for they have nothing to do but every man to look out at his own door, and they are close in a body together, facing every point that danger can possibly come from. They are, however, speedily destroyed by a stronger enemy, as we easily found, for we had only to set the dry hedge, and the canes that grew round it, on fire, which communicated at once to the houses, chiefly consisting of dry straw. Such is their terror of the small-pox, which

which comes here seldom more frequently than once in fifteen or twenty years; that when one of these houses is tainted with the disease, their neighbours, who know it will infect the whole colony, surround it in the night, and set fire to it, which is consumed in a minute, whilst the unfortunate people belonging to it (who would endeavour to escape) are unmercifully thrust back with lances and forks into the flames by the hands of their own neighbours and relations, without an instance of one ever being suffered to survive. This to us will appear a barbarity scarcely credible: it would be quite otherwise if we saw the situation of the country under that dreadful visitation of the small-pox; the plague has nothing in it so terrible.

THE river Kelti has excellent fish, though the Abyssinians care not for food of this kind; the better people eat some species in the time of Lent, but the generality of the common sort are deterred by passages of scripture, and distinctions in the Mosaic law, concerning such animals as are clean and unclean, ill understood; they are, besides, exceedingly lazy, and know nothing of nets; neither have they the ingenuity we see in other savages of making hooks or lines: in all the time I staid, I never saw one Abyssinian fisher engaged in the employment in any river or lake.

AT Kelti begins the territory of Aroossi: it is in fact the southmost division of Maitsha, on the west-side of the Nile: it is not inhabited, however, by Galla, but by Abyssinians, a kindred of the Agow. When therefore we passed the river Kelti, we entered into the territory of Aroossi, bounded on the north by that river, as it is on the south

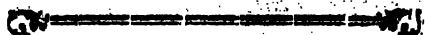
by the Affar, the Arooffi running through the midst of that district.

My anxiety to lose no time in this journey had determined me to set out this afternoon. I had for this purpose dispatched Ozoro Esther's servant, but when we began to strike our tents, we were told neither beast nor man was capable of going farther that day; in a word, the forced march that we had made of 29 miles without rest, and with but little food, had quite jaded our mules; our men, too, who carried the quadrant, declared, that, without a night's rest, they could proceed no farther; we were then obliged to make a virtue of necessity, and to confess, that, since we could go no farther, we were in the most convenient halting place possible, having plenty of both food and water, and as to protection, we had every reason to be satisfied that we were masters of the country in which we were encamped. It was generally agreed therefore to relax that day. I set aside an hour to put these memoirs in order, and then joined our servants, who, on such occasions, are always our companions, and who had provided a small horn full of spirits, and a jar full of beer, or bouza, by offering some trifling present to our commandant *the Jumper*, who was much more tenacious of his drink than his meat: we swam and dabbled with great delight in the Kelti, where are neither crocodiles nor gonaes; slept a little afterwards, and retired into the tent to a supper, which would have been a cheerful one could I have forgot that Ozoro Esther was suffering.

We now began to discuss the motive that had induced our friend Strates again to tempt the danger of the ways. This singular fellow, as we learned from Guebra Mariam,

as well as from his own confession, repented of his resolution as soon as we were gone, and had determined on foot to follow us, when he heard of this opportunity of Ozoro Esther's servant being sent on a message, and that princess was so well pleased with his anxiety that she gave him a mule that he might not retard her servant.

This Greek had known Fasil intimately, both when he was a private man in Kasmati Eshté's time, and afterwards, when he was governor of Damot, for he was a servant in the palace when Joas was king, as all the Greeks were; had a company of fusileers, and one or two other small appointments, all of which were taken from him, and from most of the other Greeks, upon the death of the dwarf, who, I before mentioned, was shot on the side of Ras Michael by an unknown hand upon his first arrival at Gondar. He now lived upon the charity of the queen-mother, and what he picked up by his buffoonery among the great men at court. We found that in Shalaka Woldo we had got a man of more understanding than our friend Srates, but much about his equal in mimicry and buffoonery.



## CHAP. XI.

*Continue our Journey—Fall in with a Party of Galla—Prove our Friends—Pass the Nile—Arrive at Goutto, and visit the first Cataract.*

ON the second of November, at seven in the morning we pursued our journey in a direction southward, and passed the church of Boskon Abbo; ever memorable to us as being the station of Fasil in May, when he intended to cut us off after our passage of the Nile. This brought on a conversation with our guide Woldo, who had been present with Fasil at his camp behind this church, and afterwards when Michael offered him battle at Limjour, he was there attending his master. He said, that the army of Wellera Yafous was above 12,000 strong; that they were intending to attack the king at the ford, and had no doubt of doing it successfully, as they imagined the King and Ras Michael, with part of both horse and foot, would pass early, but the rest with difficulty and danger; it was at that instant Wellera Yafous was to fall upon those that remained with Kessa Yafous, on the other side of the Nile, in that confusion in which they necessarily

fairly must be. Fasil then, with above 3000 horse, and a large body of foot, was ready to inclose both Ras Michael and the King, and to have taken them prisoners; nothing could fall out more exactly, as it was planned, than this did; the king's black horse, and the other horse of his household, had taken possession of the ford, till the King, the Ras, and the greatest part of the Tigré musqueteers, under Guebra Mascall, had passed.

On the other hand, Kessa Yafous, who had the charge of the rear, and the passing the mules, tents, and baggage, finding so many stragglers constantly coming in, had determined to wait on that side till day-light: this was the moment that would have decided the fate of our army; all was fatigue and despondency; but Welleta Yafous having lingered with the army of execution, and in the mean time the priests having been examined, and the spies detected, the moment Kessa Yafous began his march to Delakus, the favourable instant was lost to Fasil, and all that followed was extremely dangerous to him; for, before Welleta Yafous arrived, Kessa Yafous had passed the Nile, and was strongly posted with his musquetry, so that Welleta Yafous durst not approach him, and this gave Kessa Yafous an opportunity of detaching the best or freshest of his troops to reinforce Michael, whom Fasil found already an overmatch for him at Limjour, when he was forced to retreat before the king, who very willingly offered him battle: add to this, that Welleta Yafous was not acquainted how near this junction of Kessa Yafous with Ras Michael might be, nor where Fasil was, or whether or not he had been beaten. Woldo pretended to know nothing of the spy whom we had left hanging on the tree at the ford when Kessa Yafous marched;



ed; but he laid all the blame upon the priests, of whose information he was perfectly instructed.

At three quarters after ten in the morning we passed the small river Arooffi, which either gives its name to, or receives it from the district through which it passes: it falls into the Nile about four miles below; is a clear, small, brisk stream; its banks covered with verdure not to be described. At half an hour before noon we came to Roo; it is a level space, shaded round with trees in a small plain, where the neighbouring people of Goutto, Agow, and Maitsha hold a market for hides, honey, butter, and all kinds of cattle. Gold too is brought by the Agows from the neighbouring Shangalla; all the markets in Abyssinia are held in such places as this in the open fields, and under the shade of trees: every body, while he is there, is safe under the protection of the government where that market is kept, and no feuds or private animosities must be resented there; but they that have enemies must take care of themselves in coming and going, for then they are at their own risk.

In the dry bed of a river, at the foot of a small wood before you ascend the market-place at Roo, we found the *Lamb*, our friend the *Jumper's* brother, concealed very much like a thief in a hole, where we might easily have passed him unnoticed; we gave him some tobacco, of which he was very fond, and a few trifles. We asked him what questions we pleased about the roads, which he answered plainly, shortly, and discreetly; he assured us no Maitsha people had passed, not even to the market, and this we found afterwards was strictly true; for such as had intelligence  
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that he and his party were on that road, did not venture from home with their goods, so that the day before, which had been that of the market, no one chose to run the risk of attending it.

Woldo was very eloquent in praise of this officer the *Lamb*; he said he had a great deal more humanity than his brother, and when he made an inroad into Gojam, or any part of Abyssinia, he never murdered any women, not even those that were with child; a contrary custom it seems prevailing among all the Galla. I congratulated him upon this great instance of his humanity, which he took very gravely, as if really intended; he told me that it was he that attacked Michael's horse at Limjour; and added, that, had it been any other, Ayto Welleta Michael's life would not have been spared when he was taken prisoner. That want of curiosity, inattention, and absolute indifference for new objects, which was remarkable in the Jumper, was very plainly discernible in this chieftain likewise, and seems to be a characteristic of the nation.

I ASKED Woldo what became of those 44 Galla who had their eyes pulled out, after the battle of Fagitta, by Michael, on his return to Gondar. Not one of them, said he, ever came into his own country. It was reported the hyæna ate them upon the Angrab, where they were turned out to starve. I saved three of them, said I. Yes, answered he, and others might have been saved too: and then added, in a low voice, the hyænas eating them, at the Angrab was a story contrived for the Galla; but we that are Fasil's servants know they were made away with by his order in Maitsba and the Agow country, that none of them might be seen in

their own provinces to terrify the rest of their clans by the mangled appearance they then bore ; for this was Ras Michael's intention in disfiguring them, and yet leaving them alive ; to prevent therefore the success of this scheme, Fasil put them to death in their way before they reached their own country. I confess I was struck at the fineness which completed Waragna Fasil's character in my mind. What, said I, kill his own people taken prisoners whilst fighting for him, merely because their enemies had cruelly deprived them of their fight ! indeed, Woldo, that is not credible. O ho, says he, but it is true ; your Galla are not like other men, they do not talk about what is cruel and what is not ; they do just what is for their own good, what is reasonable, and think no more of the matter. Ras Michael, says he, would make an excellent Galla ; and do not you believe that he would do any cruel action which my master Fasil would not perpetrate on the same provocation, and to answer the same purpose ?

It now occurred to me why the three Galla, whom I had maintained at Gondar, had constantly refused to return into their own country with the many safe opportunities which at times had presented to them, especially since the king's retreat to Tigré ; neither had I observed any desire in Fasil's servants, who occasionally came to Gondar, of helping to restore these unfortunate men to their country, because they knew the fate that awaited them.

ALTHOUGH the *Lamb*, and the other Galla his soldiers, paid very little attention, as I have said, to us, it was remarkable to see the respect they shewed Fasil's horse ; the greatest part of them, one by one, gave him handfuls of barley, and  
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the *Lamb* himself had a long and serious conversation with him; Woldo told me it was all spent in regretting the horse's ill-fortune, and Fasil's cruelty, in having bestowed him upon a white man, who would not feed him, or ever let him return to Bizamo. Bizamo is a country of Galla south of the Nile, after it makes its fourthmost turn, and has surrounded the kingdom of Gojam. I was better pleased with this genuine mark of kindness to the horse, than all the proofs of humanity Woldo had attributed to his chieftain for not frequently putting to death pregnant women. When I remarked this, Bad men! bad men! all of them, says Woldo; but your Ras Michael will be among them one of these days, and pull all their eyes out again; and so much the better.

At Roo we left the direct road which leads to Buré, the residence of the governor of Damot, towards which place the route of the army was directed; so I took leave, as I hoped, for ever of my brethren the Galla, but still continued to drive the horse before me. We turned our face now directly upon the fountains of the Nile, which lay S. E. by S. according to the compass. At a quarter before noon we saw the high sharp-pointed mountain of Temhua, standing single in the form of a cone, at about 18 miles distance, and behind this the mountain of Banja, the place where Fasil almost exterminated the Agows in a battle soon after his return to Buré, and to revenge which the king's last fatal campaign was undertaken in Maitsha, terminated by his retreat to Tigrè.

HERE Strates, whilst amusing himself in the wood in search of new birds and beasts for our collection of natural history, fired his gun at one of the former, distinguished by

the beauty and variety of its plumage. I stopt to make a rough sketch of it, which might be finished at more leisure: this was scarcely done, and we again moving forwards on our journey, when we heard a confusion of shrill, barbarous cries, and presently saw a number of horsemen pouring down upon us, with their lances lifted up in a posture ready to attack us immediately. The ground was woody and uneven, so they could not make the speed they seemed to desire, and we had just time to put ourselves upon our defence with our firelocks, musquets, and blunderbusses in our hands, behind our baggage. Woldo ran several paces towards them, knowing them by the cry to be friends, even before he had seen them, which was, Fasil ali, Fasil ali—*there is none but Fasil that commands here.* Upon seeing us without any marks of discomposure, they all stopt with Woldo, and by him we learned that this was the party we had passed commanded by the *Lamb*, who, after we had left him, had heard that five Agow horsemen had passed between the army and his party, and from the shot he had feared they might have attempted something against us, and he had thereupon come to our assistance with all the speed possible.

Thus did we see that this man, who, according to our ideas, seemed in understanding inferior to most of the brute creation, had yet, in executing his orders, a discernment, punctuality, activity, and sense of duty, equal to any Christian officer who should have had a like commission; he now appeared to us in a quite different light than when we first had met him; and his inattention, when we were with him, was the more agreeable, as it left us at our entire liberty, without teasing or molesting us, when he could be  
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of no real service, as every Amharic foldier would have done. On the other hand, his alacrity and resolution, in the moment he thought us in danger, exhibited him to our view as having on both occasions just the qualities we could have desired. We now, therefore, shewed him the utmost civility, spread a table-cloth on the ground by the brook, mixed our honey and liquid butter together in a plate, and laid plenty of telf bread beside it. We invited the Lamb to sit down and breakfast with us, which he did, each of us dipping our hand with pieces of bread alternately into the dish which contained the honey ; but Strates, whose heart was open, for he felt very gratefully the Lamb's attention to save him from being murdered by the Agows, pulled out a large piece of raw beef, part of the bullock we killed at Kelti, which he had perfectly cleared from all incumbrance of bones, this he gave to the Lamb, desiring him to divide it among his men, which he did, keeping a very small proportion to himself, and which he ate before us. Drink we had none, but the water of the brook that ran by, for my people had finished all our other liquors at Kelti after I was in bed, when they were taking their leave of Guebra Mariam, Ozoro Esther's servant.

It was now time to pursue our journey ; and, to shew our gratitude for the real service this Lamb intended to have rendered us, I gave him four times the quantity of tobacco he had got before, and so in proportion of every other trifle ; all these he took with absolute indifference as formerly, much as if it had been all his own ; he expressed no sort of thanks either in his words or in his countenance ; only while at breakfast said, that he was very much grieved that it had been but a false alarm, for he heartily desired that some robbers

bers really had attacked us, that he might have shewn us how quickly and dexterously he would have cut them to pieces though there had been a hundred of them. I mentioned to Woldo my obligations to the Lamb for his good wishes, but that things were quite as well as they were; that I had no sort of curiosity for such exhibitions, which I did not however doubt he would have performed most dexterously.

We were now taking leave to proceed on our journey, and my servant folding up the table-cloth, when the Lamb desired to speak to Woldo, and for the first time ventured to make a request, which was a very extraordinary one; he begged that I would give him the table-cloth to cover his head, and keep his face from the sun. I could not help laughing within myself at the idea of preserving that beautiful complexion from sun-burning; but I gave him the cloth very readily, which he accordingly spread upon his head, till it covered half his face; he then got upon his horse and rode quietly away. Before he went, he detached fifteen men, Woldo said he did not know where, but by what he had gathered, and the route they had taken, he was sure that detachment was meant for our service, and to protect us on the right of our route, not having yet sufficiently quieted his own mind about the five Agows that passed between the army and his post the night we were at Keld; these, however, being poorly mounted and armed, would not have found their account in meddling with us, though we had no wishes to shew our dexterity in destroying them, as our friend the Lamb was so desirous of doing, and we after discovered they were not quite so despicable as they were represented, nor were they Agows. All this passed in much less time than it is told. We were on horseback again in little more than half

an hour ; our friends were, like us, willing to meet and willing to part, only I ordered Strates to suspend his firing for that day, lest it should procure us another interview, which we by no means courted.

We had halted by the side of a small river which falls into the Affar ; and a little before one o'clock we came to the Affar itself. The Affar, as I have already said, is the southern boundary of Arooffi, as Kelti is the northern ; and as Arooffi is the southern district of Maitsha on the west side of the Nile, it follows that the Affar is the southern boundary of Maitsha.

On the other side of this river begins the province of Goutto, which, according to the ancient rules of government before Ras Michael destroyed all distinctions, depended on the province of Damot ; whereas Maitsha belonged to the office of Betwudet since Fasil had appropriated both to himself by force, as well as the whole country of the Agows, which he had possessed by the same title ever since the battle of Banja : the inhabitants of Goutto are the ancient natives of that country ; they are not Galla as those of Maitsha, but much more civilized and better governed. The language of the Agow and the Amharic are the two chiefly spoken in Goutto, though there are distant places towards the Jemma on the side of the Nile, where they speak that of the Falasha likewise. The people in Goutto are richer and better lodged than those of the neighbouring Maitsha ; their whole country is full of cattle of the largest size, exceedingly beautiful, and of all the different colours ; there are some places likewise where their honey is excellent, equal to any in the country of the Agows, but the greatest quantity of it is of low price  
and



and of little esteem, owing to the lupine flowers on which the bees feed, and of which a great quantity covers the whole face of the country; this gives a bitterness to the greatest part of the honey, and occasions, as they believe, vertigo's, or dizzinesses, to those that eat it: the same would happen with the Agows, did they not take care to eradicate the lupines throughout their whole country.

ALL this little territory of Aroossi is by much the most pleasant that we had seen in Abyssinia, perhaps it is equal to any thing the east can produce; the whole is finely shaded with acacia-trees, I mean the *acacia vera*, or the Egyptian thorn, the tree which, in the sultry parts of Africa, produces the gum-arabic. These trees grow seldom above fifteen or sixteen feet high, then flatten and spread wide at the top, and touch each other, while the trunks are far asunder, and under a vertical sun, leave you, many miles together, a free space to walk in a cool, delicious shade. There is scarce any tree but this in Matsha; all Guanguera and Wainadega are full of them; but in these last-mentioned places, near the capital, where the country grows narrower, being confined between the lake and the mountains, these trees are more in the way of the march of armies, and are thinner, as being constantly cut down for fuel, and never replanted, or suffered to replace themselves, which they otherwise would do, and cover the whole face of the country, as once apparently they did. The ground below those trees, all throughout Aroossi, is thick covered with lupines, almost to the exclusion of every other flower; wild oats also grow up here spontaneously to a prodigious height and size, capable often of concealing both the horse and his rider, and some of the stalks being little less than an inch

in circumference. They have, when ripe, the appearance of small canes. The inhabitants make no sort of use of this grain in any period of its growth: the uppermost thin husk of it is beautifully variegated with a changeable purple colour; the taste is perfectly good. I often made the meal into cakes in remembrance of Scotland.

THE Abyssinians never could relish these cakes, which they said were bitter, and burnt their stomachs, as also made them thirsty. I do, however, believe this is the oat in its original state, and that it is degenerated everywhere with us. The soil of this country is a fine black mould, in appearance like to that which composes our gardens. The oat seems to delight in a moist, watery soil; and, as no underwood grows under the shadow of the trees, the plough passes without interruption. As there is likewise no iron in their plough, (for is it all composed of wood) the furrow is a very slight one, nor does the plough reach deep enough to be entangled with the roots of trees; but it is the north part of Maitsha, however, that is chiefly in culture; south of the Kelti all is pasture; a large number of horses is bred here yearly, for it is the custom among the Galla to be all horsemen or graziers.

ALL Arooffi is finely watered with small streams, though the Affar is the largest river we had seen except the Nile; it was about 170 yards broad and two feet deep, running over a bed of large stones; though generally through a flat and level country, it is very rapid, and after much rain scarcely passable, owing to the height of its source in the mountains of the Agows; its course, where we forded it, is from south

to north, but it soon turns to the north-east, and, after flowing five or six miles, joins the Nile and loses itself in that river.

IMMEDIATELY below this ford of the Affar is a magnificent cascade, or cataract. I computed the perpendicular height of the fall to be above 20 feet, and the breadth of the stream to be something more than 80; but it is so closely covered with trees or bushes, and the ground so uneven, that it needs great perseverance and attention to approach it nearly with safety; the stream covers the rock without leaving any part of it visible, and the whole river falls uninterrupted down with an incredible violence and noise, without being anyway broken or divided; below this cataract it becomes considerably narrower, and, as we have said, in this state runs on to join the Nile.

THE strength of vegetation which the moisture of this river produces, supported by the action of a very warm sun, is such as one might naturally expect from theory, though we cannot help being surprised at the effects when we see them before us, trees and shrubs covered with flowers of every colour, all new and extraordinary in their shapes, crowded with birds of many uncouth forms, all of them richly adorned with variety of plumage, and seeming to fix their residence upon the banks of this river, without a desire of wandering to any distance in the neighbouring fields: But as there is nothing, though ever so beautiful, that has not some defect or imperfection, among all these feathered beauties there is not one songster; and, unless of the rose, or jessamin kind, none of their flowers have any smell; we hear indeed many squalling noisy birds of the jay kind, and we find two varieties of wild roses, white and yellow, to which

I may

I may add jessamin (called Leham) which becomes a large tree; but all the rest of the birds or flowers may be considered as liable to the general observation, that the flowers are destitute of odour, and the birds of song.

AFTER passing the Assar, and several villages belonging to Goutto, our course being S. E. we had, for the first time, a distinct view of the high mountain of Geesh, the long-wished-for end of our dangerous and troublesome journey. Under this mountain are the fountains of the Nile; it bore from us S. E. by S. about thirty miles, as near as we could conjecture, in a straight line, without counting the deviations or crookedness of the road.

EVER since we had passed the Assar we had been descending gently through very uneven ground, covered thick with trees, and torn up by the gullies and courses of torrents. At two o'clock in the afternoon of the second of November we came to the banks of the Nile; the passage is very difficult and dangerous, the bottom being full of holes made by considerable springs, light sinking sand, and, at every little distance, large rocky stones; the eastern side was muddy and full of pits, the ground of clay: the Nile here is about 260 feet broad, and very rapid; its depth about four feet in the middle of the river, and the sides not above two. Its banks are of a very gentle, easy descent; the western side is chiefly ornamented with high trees of the salix, or willow tribe, growing straight, without joints or knots, and bearing long pointed pods full of a kind of cotton. This tree is called, in their language, Ha; the use they have for it is to make charcoal for the composition of gunpowder; but on the eastern side, the banks, to a considerable distance from the

river, are covered with black, dark, and thick groves, with craggy-pointed rocks, and overshadowed with some old, tall, timber trees going to decay with age; a very rude and awful face of nature, a cover from which our fancy suggested a lion should issue, or some animal or monster yet more savage and ferocious.

THE veneration still paid in this country for the Nile, such as obtained in antiquity, extends to the territory of Goutto, and I believe very little farther; the reason is, I apprehend, that to this, and no lower, the country has remained under its ancient inhabitants. Below, we know Maitsha ha: been occupied within these few ages by Pagan Galla, transplanted here for political purposes; at Goutto, however, and in the provinces of the Agows, the genuine indigenæ have not emigrated, and with these the old superstition is more firmly rooted in their hearts than is the more recent doctrine of Christianity; they crowded to us at the ford, and they were, after some struggle, of great use in passing us, but they protested immediately with great vehemence against any man's riding across the stream, mounted either upon horse or mule: they, without any sort of ceremony, unloaded our mules, and laid our baggage upon the grass, insisting that we should take off our shoes, and making an appearance of stoning those who attempted to wash the dirt off their cloaks and trowsers in the stream. My servants were by this provoked to return rudeness for rudeness, and Woldo gave them two or three significant threats, while I sat by exceedingly happy at having so unexpectedly found the remnants of veneration for that ancient deity still subsisting in such full vigour. They after this allowed us, as well as our horses and mules, to drink, and conducted me across the river, holding

holding me on each side very attentively for fear of the holes; but the want of shoes was very inconvenient, the pointed rocks and stones at the bottom giving me several deep cuts on the soles of my feet; after this the beasts were led all to the same side with myself, also one servant was passed with the greatest care by these poor people. Woldo had tipped me the wink to cross as they desired me: except my single gun, all the fire-arms and servants remained with the baggage and Woldo; and now we soon saw what was his intention, and how well he understood that the country he was in belonged to Fasil his master.

THERE were between twenty and thirty of the Agows, old and young, some of them armed with lances and shields, and all of them with knives. Woldo took his small stick in one hand, sat down upon a green hillock by the ford with his lighted pipe in the other; he ranged my people behind him, leaving the baggage by itself, and began gravely to exhort the Agows to lose no time in carrying over our baggage upon their shoulders. This proposal was treated with a kind of ridicule by the foremost of the Agows, and they began plainly to insinuate that he should first settle with them a price for their trouble. He continued, however, smoking his pipe in seeming leisure, and much at his ease, and, putting on an air of great wisdom, in a tone of moderation he appealed to them whether they had not of their own accord insisted on our crossing the river on foot, had unloaded our baggage, and sent the mules to the other side without our consent. The poor people candidly declared that they had done so, because none are permitted in any other manner to cross the Nile, but that they would likewise carry our baggage safely and willingly over for

pay; this word was no sooner uttered, when, apparently in a most violent passion, he leapt up, laid by his pipe, took his stick, and ran into the midst of them, crying out with violent execrations, And who am I? and who am I then? a girl, a woman, or a Pagan dog like yourselves? and who is Waragna Fafil; are you not his slaves? or to whom else do you belong, that you are to make me pay for the consequences of your devilish idolatries and superstitions? but you want payment, do ye? here is your payment: he then tuckt his clothes tight about his girdle, began leaping two or three feet high, and laying about him with his stick over their heads and faces, or wherever he could strike them.

AFTER this Woldo wrested a lance from a long, aukward fellow that was next him, standing amazed, and levelled the point at him in a manner that I thought to see the poor peasant fall dead in an instant: the fellow fled in a trice, so did they all to a man; and no wonder, for in my life I never saw any one play the furious devil so naturally. Upon the man's running off, he cried out to my people to give him a gun, which made these poor wretches run faster and hide themselves among the bushes: lucky, indeed, was it for Woldo that my servants did not put him to the trial, by giving him the gun as he demanded, for he would not have ventured to fire it, perhaps to have touched it, if it had been to have made him master of the province.

I, who sat a spectator on the other side, thought we were now in a fine scrape, the evening coming on at a time of the year when it is not light at six, my baggage and servants on one side of the river, myself and beasts on the  
other,

other, crippled absolutely in the feet by the stones, and the river so full of pits and holes, that, had they been all laden on the other side and ready, no one could have been bold enough to lead a beast through without a guide: the difficulty was not imaginary, I had myself an instant before made proof of it, and all difficulties are relative, greater or less, as you have means in your hands to overcome them. I was clearly satisfied that Woldo knew the country, and was provided with a remedy for all this; I conceived that this pacific behaviour, while they were unloading the mules, and driving them across the river, as well as his fury afterwards, was part of some scheme, with which I was resolved in no shape to interfere; and nothing convinced me more of this than his resolute demand of a gun, when no persuasion could make him stay within ten yards of one if it was discharged, even though the muzzle was pointed a contrary direction. I sat still, therefore, to see the end, and it was with some surprise that I observed him to take his pipe, stick, and my servants along with him, and cross the river to me as if nothing had happened, leaving the baggage on the other side, without any guard whatsoever; he then desired us all to get on horseback, and drive the mules before us, which we did accordingly; and I suppose we had not advanced about a hundred yards before we saw a greater number of people than formerly run down to where our baggage was lying, and, while one crossed the river to desire us to stay where we were, the rest brought the whole over in an instant.

THIS, however, did not satisfy our guide; he put on a sulky air, as if he had been grievously injured; he kept the mules where they were, and would not send one back to be loaded



loaded at the river-side, alledging it was unlucky to turn back upon a journey; he made them again take the baggage on their shoulders, and carry it to the very place where our mules had halted, and there lay it down. On this they all flocked about him, begging that he would not report them to his master, as fearing some fine, or heavy chastisement, would fall upon their villages. The guide looked very sulky, said but very little, and that all in praise of himself, of his known mildness and moderation; as an instance of which he appealed (impudently enough) to his late behaviour towards them. If such a one, says he, naming a man that they knew, had been in my place, what a fine reckoning he would have made with you; why, your punishment would not have ended in seven years. They all acknowledged the truth of his observation, as well as his moderation, gave him great commendations, and, I believe, some promises when he passed there on his return.

HERE I thought our affair happily ended to the satisfaction of all parties. I mounted my horse, and Woldo went to a large silk bag, or purse, which I had given him full of tobacco, and he had his match and pipe in his hand, just as if he was going to fill it before he set out; he then unloosed the bag, felt it on the outside, putting first his three fingers, then his whole hand, pinching and squeezing it both within-side and without; at last he broke out in a violent transport of rage, crying that *his gold* was gone, and that they had robbed him of it. I had not till this spoke one word: I asked him what he meant by his gold. He said he had two ounces (value about 5*l*.) in his tobacco purse, and that some person had laid hold of them when the baggage lay on the other side of the water; that the Agows had done it, and

that they must pay him for it. The despair and anguish that he had counterfeited quickly appeared in true and genuine colours in the faces of all the poor Agows ; for his part, he disdained to speak but in monosyllables—So, so, and very well, and no matter, you shall see—and shook his head. We now proceeded on our journey; but two of the eldest among the Agows followed him to our quarters at night, where they made their peace with Woldo, who, I doubt not, dealt with them according to his usual mildness, justice, and moderation ; a specimen of which we have already seen.

I CONFESS this complicated piece of roguery, so suddenly invented, and so successfully carried into execution, gave me, for the first time, serious reflections upon my own situation, as we were in fact entirely in this man's hand. Ayto Aylo's servant, indeed, continued with me, but he was now out of his knowledge and influence, and, from many hints he had given, very desirous of returning home : he seemed to have no great opinion of Woldo, and, indeed, had been in low spirits, and disgusted with our journey, since he had seen the reception I first met with from Fasil at Bamba; but I had use for him till we should arrive at the house of Shalaka Welled Amlac, which was in the middle of Maitsha, and in the way by which we were to return. I had therefore been very kind to him, allowing him to ride upon one of my mules all the way. I had given him some presents likewise, and promised him more, so that he continued with me, though not very willingly, observing every thing, but saying little ; however, to me it was plain that Woldo stood in awe of him, for fear probably of his master Fasil, for Aylo had over him a most absolute influence, and Guebra Ehud

(Aylo's brother) had been present, when Aylo's servant set out with us from Bamba under charge of this Woldo.

To Woldo, too, I had been very attentive: I had anticipated what I saw were his wishes, by small presents and more considerable promises. I had told him plainly at Bamba, in presence of Fafil's Fit-Auraris and Ayto Wellela Michael, (Ras Michael's nephew) that I would reward him in their fight according to his behaviour; that I scarcely thanked him for his being barely faithful, for so he was accountable to his master, whose honour was pledged for my safety; but that I expected he would not attempt to impose upon me, nor suffer others to do so, nor terrify me unnecessarily upon the road, nor obstruct me in my pursuits, be sulky, or refuse to answer the inquiries that I made about the countries through which we were to pass. All this was promised, repromised, and repeatedly sworn to, and the Fit-Auraris had assured me that he knew certainly this man would please me, and that Fafil was upon honour when he had chosen him to attend me, although he had then use for him in other business; and it is not less true, that, during the whole of our journey hitherto, he had behaved perfectly to the letter of his promise, and I had omitted no opportunity to gratify him by several anticipations of mine,

I HAD upon me a large beautiful red-silk sash, which went six or seven times round, in which I carried my crooked knife and two pistols; he had often admired the beauty of it, inquired where it was made, and what it might have cost. I had answered often negligently and at random, and I had thought no more of it, as his inquiries had gone no further. The time which he had fixed upon was not yet  
come,

come, and we shall presently see how very dexterously he prolonged it.

WE arrived, with these delays, pretty late at Goutto, (the village so called) and took up our lodgings in the house of a considerable person, who had abandoned it upon our approach, thinking us part of Fasil's army. Though this habitation was of use in protecting us from the poor, yet it hurt us by alarming, and so depriving us of the assistance of the opulent, such as the present owner, who, if he had known we were strangers from Gondar, would have willingly staid and entertained us, being a relation and friend of Shalaka Welled Amlac.

As we heard distinctly the noise of the cataract, and had still a full hour and a half of light, while they were in search of a cow to kill, (the cattle having been all driven away or concealed) I determined to visit the water-fall, lest I should be thereby detained the next morning. As Fasil's horse was fresh, by not being rode, I mounted him instead of driving him before me, and took a servant of my own, and a man of the village whom Woldo procured for us, as I would not allow him to go himself. Being well armed, I thus set out, with the peasant on foot, for the cataract; and, after riding through a plain, hard country, in some parts very stony, and thick-covered with trees, in something more than half an hour's easy galloping all the way, my servant and I came straight to the cataract, conducted there by the noise of the fall, while our guide remained at a considerable distance behind, not being able to overtake us.

THIS, known by the name of the First Cataract of the Nile, did not by its appearance come up to the idea we had formed of it, being scarce sixteen feet in height, and about sixty yards over; but in many places the sheet of water is interrupted, and leaves dry intervals of rock. The sides are neither so woody nor verdant as those of the cataract of the Assar; and it is in every shape less magnificent, or deserving to be seen, than is the noble cataract at Alata before described, erroneously called the Second Cataract; for below this there is a water-fall, nearly west of the church of Boskon Abbo, not much above the place where we swam our horses over in May, and less than this first cataract of which I am speaking, and nearer the source; there is another still smaller before the Nile joins the river Gumetti, after falling from the plains of Sacala; and there are several still smaller between the fountains and the junction of the Nile with the river Davola; these last mentioned, however, are very insignificant, and appear only when the Nile is low: in the rainy season, when the river is full, they scarcely are distinguished by ruffling the water as it passes.

HAVING satisfied my curiosity at this cataract, I galloped back the same road that I had come, without having seen a single person since I left Goutto. Fasil's horse went very pleasantly, he did not like the spur, indeed, but he did not need it. On our arrival we found a cow upon the point of being killed; there was no appearance of any such to be found when I set out for the cataract, but the diligence and sagacity of Woldo had overcome that difficulty. By a particular manner of crying through his hands applied to his mouth, he had contrived to make some beasts answer him, who

who were hid in an unsuspected bye-place, one of which being detected was killed without mercy.

It was now, I thought, the proper time to give Woldo a lesson as to the manner in which I was resolved to behave among the Agows, who I knew had been reduced to absolute poverty by Fasil after the battle of Banja. I told him, that since the king had given me the small territory of Geesh, I was resolved to take up my abode there for some time; and also, to make my coming more agreeable, it was my intention for that year to discharge them of any taxes which they paid the king, or their superior Fasil, in whose places I then stood. "Stay, says Woldo, don't be in such a hurry, see first how they behave."—"No, said I, I will begin by teaching them how to behave; I will not wait till their present misery prompts them to receive ill (as they very naturally will do) a man who comes, as they may think, wantonly for curiosity only, to take from them and their starved families the little Fasil has left them: the question I ask you then is briefly this, Do you conceive yourself obliged to obey me, as to what I shall judge necessary to direct you to do, during my journey to Geesh and back again?" He answered, By all means, or he could never else return to his master Fasil. "This, then, said I, is the line of conduct I mean to pursue while I am among the Agows; you shall have money to buy every thing; you shall have money, or presents, or both, to pay those that serve us, or that shew us any kindness, and when we shall join your master Fasil (as I hope we shall do together) you shall tell him that I have received his majesty's rent of the Agows of Geesh, and I will enter a receipt for it in the king's deftar, or revenue-book at Gondar, if we see him there, as I expect we shall, upon my return. I, moreover,

moreover, undertake, that we shall gain more by this than by any other method we could have pursued." "There is one thing, however, says Woldo, you would not surely have me free them the dues paid by every village where a king's servant is employed to conduct strangers, as I am you." "No, no, I do not go so near as that; we shall only buy what you would have otherwise taken by force for my use."

"Some years ago, says Woldo; when I was a young man, in king Yafous's time, a white man, called Negadé Ras Georgis, had both Geesh and Sacala given him by the king; he went there twice a-year, and staid a month or more at a time; he was a great hunter and drinker, and a devil for the women; he not only spent what he got from the village, but all the money he brought from Gondar into the bargain; it was a jovial time, as I have heard; all was merriment: The first day he came there, some of the men of Sacala, out of sport, disputing with three of the Agows of Zeegam, fell to it with their knives and lances, and four men were killed in an instant upon the spot; fine stout fellows, every one like a lion; good men all of them; there are no such days seen now, unless they come about when you are there, and then I shall have my share of everything". "Woldo, said I, with all my heart; I shall be otherwise employed; but you shall be at perfect liberty to partake of every sport, always excepting the diversion of killing four men." But I had observed this day, with some surprise, that he doubted several times whether we were on the way to the fountains of the Nile or not; and I did not think this prospect of entertainment, which I held out to him was received with such joy as I expected, or as if he meant to partake of it.

STRATES had refused to go to the first cataract, having so violent an appetite that he could not abandon the cow; and, after my arrival, it was his turn to watch that night. When I was lain down to rest in a little hovel like a hog's sty, near where they were sitting, I heard a warm dispute among the servants, and, upon inquiry, found Strates was preparing steaks on a gridiron to make an entertainment for himself while the rest were sleeping; these, on the other hand, were resolved to play him a trick to punish his gluttony. When the steaks were spread upon the gridiron, Woldo had undertaken to pour some fine dust, or sand, through the hole in the roof, which served as a chimney; and this he had done with success as often as Strates went to any distance from the fire. Not content, however, with the position in which he then was, but desirous to do it more effectually, he attempted to change his place upon the roof where he stood, thinking it all equally strong to bear him; but in this he was mistaken; the part he was removing to suddenly gave way, and down he came upon the floor, bringing half the roof and part of the wall, together with a prodigious dust, into the fire.

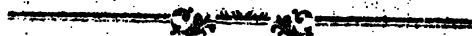
THE surprise and sight of his own danger made Woldo repeat some ejaculation to himself in Galla. My servants, who were waiting the success of the scheme, cried, The Galla! the Galla! and Strates, who thought the whole army of wild Galla had surrounded the house, fell upon his face, calling Maruni! Maruni!—Spare me! spare me!—I was in a profound sleep when roused by the noise of the roof, the falling of the man, and the cry of Galla! Galla! I started up, and laid hold of a musket loaded with flugs, a bayonet at the end of it, and ran to the door, when the first thing



thing I saw was Woldo examining his hurts, or burns, but without any arms. A laugh from without made me directly suppose what it was, and I was presently fully satisfied by the figure Strates and Woldo made, covered with dirt and dust from the roof; but, while they were entertaining themselves with this foolish trick, the thatch that had fallen upon the fire began to flame, and it was with the utmost difficulty we extinguished it, otherwise the whole village might have been burnt down.—I heard distinctly the noise of the cataract all this night.



CHAP.



## C H A P. XII.

*Leave Goutto -- Mountains of the Moon --- Roguery of Woldo our Guide ---  
Arrive at the Source of the Nile.*

IT was the 3d of November, at eight o'clock in the morning, that we left the village of Goutto, and continued, for the first part of the day, through a plain country full of acacia-trees, and a few of other sorts; but they were all pollards, that is, stunted, by having their tops cut off when young, so that they bore now nothing but small twigs, or branches; these, too, seemed to have been lopped yearly. As there appeared no doubt that this had been done purposely, and for use, I asked, and was informed, that we were now in the honey country, and that these twigs were for making large baskets, which they hung upon trees at the sides of their houses, like bird-cages, for the bees to make their honey in them during the dry months; all the houses we passed afterwards, and the trees near them, were furnished

nished with these baskets, having numerous hives of bees at work in them; the people themselves seemed not to heed them, but they were an excessive plague to us by their stings during the day, so that it was only when we were out in the fields, or at night in the house, that we were free from this inconvenience.

THE high mountain of Berfa now bore south from us about ten miles distant; it resembles, in shape, a gunner's wedge, and towers up to the very clouds amidst the lesser mountains of the Agow. Sacala is south south-east. The country of the Agows extends from Berfa on the south to the point of due west, in form of an amphitheatre, formed all round by mountains, of which that of Banja lies south south-west about nine miles off. The country of the Shangalla, beyond the Agows, lies west north-west. From this point all the territory of Goutto is full of villages, in which the fathers, sons, and grandsons live together; each degree, indeed, in a separate house, but near or touching each other, as in Maitsha, so that every village consists of one family.

At three quarters past eight we crossed a small, but clear river, called Dee-ohha, or the River Dee. It is singular to observe the agreement of names of rivers in different parts of the world, that have never had communication together. The Dee is a river in the north of Scotland. The Dee runs through Cheshire likewise in England; and Dee is a river here in Abyssinia. Kelti is the name of a river in Monteith; Kelti, too, we found in Maitsha. Arno is a well-known river in Tuscany; and we found another Arno, below Emfras, falling into the lake Tzana. Not one of these rivers, as far as I could observe, resemble each other in any one circumstance,

stance, nor have they a meaning or signification in any one language I know.

THE church of Abbo is a quarter of a mile to our right, and the church of Eion Mariam bears east by south half a mile. We resumed our journey at half past nine, and, after advancing a few minutes, we came in sight of the ever-memorable field of Fagitta. At a quarter past ten we were pointing to the south-east, the two great clans of the Agow, Zeegam and Dengui, being to the south-west; the remarkable mountain Davenanza is about eight miles off, bearing south-east by south, and the course of the Nile is east and west. Eastward still from this is the high mountain of Adama, one of the ridges of Amid Amid, which form the entrance of a narrow valley on the east side, as the mountains of Litchambara do on the west. In this valley runs the large river Jemma, rising in the mountains, which, after passing thro' part of Maitsha, falls below into the Nile. The mountains from this begin to rise high, whereas at Samseen they are very low and inconsiderable. Adama is about ten miles from our present situation, which is also famous for a battle fought by Fasil's father, while governor of Damot, against the people of Maitsha, in which they were totally defeated.

WE now descended into a large plain full of marshes, bounded on the west by the Nile, and at ten and three quarters we crossed the small river Diwa, which comes from the east and runs to the westward: though not very broad, it was by much the deepest river we had passed; the banks of earth being perpendicular and infirm, and the bottom foul and clayey, we were obliged to dismount ourselves, unload the mules, and carry our baggage over. This was a trouble-

some operation, though we succeeded at last. I often regretted to Woldo, that he could not here find some of the good people like the Agows at the ford of the Nile; but he shook his head, saying, These are another sort of stuff; we may be very thankful if they let us pass ourselves: in the flat country I do not wish to meet one man on this side the mountain Aformatha.

IN this plain, the Nile winds more in the space of four miles than, I believe, any river in the world; it makes above a hundred turns in that distance, one of which advances so abruptly into the plain that we concluded we must pass it, and were preparing accordingly, when we saw it make as sharp a turn to the right, and run far on in a contrary direction, as if we were never to have met it again: the Nile is not here above 20 feet broad, and is nowhere above a foot deep. The church of Yafous was above three quarters of a mile to the west.

At one o'clock we ascended a ridge of low hills which terminates this plain to the south. The mountains behind them are called Attata; they are covered thick with brushwood, and are cut through with gullies and beds of torrents. At half past one we were continuing S. E.; in a few minutes after we passed a clear but small stream, called Minch, which signifies the Fountain. At two o'clock we arrived at the top of the mountain of Attata, and from this discovered the river Abola coming from the S. S. E. and in a few minutes passed another small river called Giddili, which loses itself immediately in a turn, or elbow, which the river Abola makes here below. At half past two we descended the mountain of Attata, and immediately at the foot.

foot of it crossed a small river of the same name, which terminates the territory of Attata; here, to the south, it is indeed narrow, but very difficult to pass by reason of its muddy bottom. The sun all along the plain of Goutto had been very hot till now, and here so excessively, that it quite overcame us: what was worse, Woldo declared himself ill, that he doubted if he could go any farther, but believed he should die at the next village. Though I knew too much of the matter to think him in any danger from real disease, I saw easily that he was infected with a counterfeit one, which I did not doubt was to give me as much trouble as a real one would have done.

At three o'clock, however, we pushed on towards the S. E. and began to enter into the plain of Abola, one of the divisions of the Agow. The plain, or rather valley, of Abola, is about half a mile broad for the most part, and nowhere exceeds a mile. The mountains that form it on the east and west side are at first of no considerable height, and are covered with herbage and acacia-trees to the very top; but as they run south, they increase in height, and become more rugged and woody. On the top of these are most delightful plains, full of excellent pasture; the mountains to the west are part of, or at least join the mountain of Aformasha, where, from a direction nearly S. E. they turn south, and inclose the villages and territory of Sacala, which lie at the foot of them, and still lower, that is more to the westward, the small village of Geesh, where are the long-expected fountains of the Nile.

THESE mountains are here in the form of a crescent; the river runs in the plain along the foot of this ridge, and  
along

along the side of it Kasmati Fasil passed after his defeat at Faggitta. The mountains which form the east side of this plain run parallel to the former in their whole course, and are part of, or at least join the mountains of Litchambara, and these two, when behind Aformasha, turn to the south, and then to the S. W. taking the same form as they do, only making a greater curve, and inclosing them likewise in the form of a crescent, the extremity of which terminates immediately above the small lake Gooderoo, in the plain of Affoa, below Geesh, and directly at the fountains of the Nile.

THE river Abola comes out of the valley between these two ridges of mountains of Litchambara and Aformasha, but does not rise there ; it has two branches, one of which hath its source in the western side of Litchambara, near the center of the curve where the mountains turn south ; the other branch rises on the mountain of Aformasha, and the east side of our road as we ascended to the church of Mariam. Still behind these are the mountains of Amid Amid, another ridge which begin behind Samseen, in the S. W. part of the province of Maitsha, though they become high only from the mountain of Adama, but they are in shape exactly like the former ridges, embracing them in a large curve in the shape of a crescent.

BETWEEN Amid Amid and the ridge of Litchambara is the deep valley now known by the name of St George ; what was its ancient, or Pagan name, I could not learn. Through the middle of this valley runs the Jemma, a river equal to the Nile, if not larger, but infinitely more rapid : after leaving the valley, it crosses that part of Maitsha on

the east of the Nile, and loses itself in that river below Sam-seen, near the ford where our army passed in the unfortunate retreat of the month of May: its sources or fountains are three; they rise in the mountains of Amid Amid, and keep on close to the east side of them, till the river issues out of the valley into Maitsha.

THIS triple ridge of mountains disposed one range behind the other, nearly in form of three concentric circles, seem to suggest an idea that they are the Mountains of the Moon, or the *Montes Luna* of antiquity, at the foot of which the Nile was said to rise; in fact, there are no others. Amid Amid may perhaps exceed half a mile in height, they certainly do not arrive at three quarters, and are greatly short of that fabulous height given them by Kircher. These mountains are all of them excellent soil, and everywhere covered with fine pasture; but as this unfortunate country had been for ages the theatre of war, the inhabitants have only ploughed and sown the top of them out of the reach of enemies or marching armies. On the middle of the mountain are villages built of a white sort of grass, which makes them conspicuous at a great distance; the bottom is all grass, where their cattle feed continually under their eye; these, upon any alarm, they drive up to the top of the mountains out of danger. The hail lies often upon the top of Amid Amid for hours, but snow was never seen in this country, nor have they a word\* in their language for it. It is also remarkable, though we had often violent hail

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\* By this is meant the Amharic, for in Geez the word for snow is 'Tilze: this may have been invented for translating the scriptures.



at Gondar, and even when the sun was vertical, it never came but with the wind blowing directly from Amid Amid.

At ten minutes past three o'clock we crossed the small river Iworra, in the valley of Abola; it comes from the east, and runs westward into that river. At a quarter after four we halted at a house in the middle of the plain, or valley. This valley is not above a mile broad, the river being distant about a quarter, and runs at the foot of the mountains. This village, as indeed were all the others we had seen since our crossing the Nile at Goutto, was surrounded by large, thick plantations, of that singular plant, the Enfete, one of the most beautiful productions of nature, as well as most agreeable and wholesome food of man. It is said to have been brought by the Galla from Narea, first to Maitsha, then to Goutto, the Agows, and Damot, which last is a province on the south side of the mountains of Amid Amid. This plant, and the root, called Denitch, (the same which is known in Europe by the name of the Jerusalem artichoke, a root deserving more attention than is paid to it in our country,) supply all these provinces with food.

We were but seldom lucky enough to get the people of the villages to wait our arrival; the fears of the march of the Galla, and the uncertainty of their destination, made them believe always we were detachments of that army, to which the presence of Fasil's horse driven constantly before us very much contributed: we found the village where we alighted totally abandoned, and in it only an earthen pot, with a large slice of the Enfete plant boiling in it; it was about a foot in length, and ten inches broad, and was almost ready

for eating: we had fortunately meat with us, and only wanting vegetables to complete our dinner. We appropriated to ourselves, without scruple, this enfete; and, by way of reparation, I insisted upon leaving, at parting, a brick, or wedge of salt, which is used as small money in Gondar, and all over Abyssinia; it might be in value about a shilling.

On the 4th of November, at eight o'clock we left our small village on the plain of Abola, without having seen any of the inhabitants; however, we were sure there were among them some who were curious enough to wish to look at us, for, in walking late at night, I heard several voices speaking low among the enfete-trees and canes. It was not possible to collect what they said in the low tone in which they spoke; and I should not probably have been much wiser, had they spoken louder, as their language was that of their country, the Agow, of which I did not understand one word; however, I thought I could distinguish they were women, the men apprehending we were enemies having probably taken refuge in the mountains above. I did every thing possible to surround or surprise one or two of these people, that, by good-usage and presents, we might reconcile them to us, and get the better of their fear; but it was all to no purpose; they fled much quicker than we could pursue them, as they knew the country, and it was not safe to follow them far into the wilderness, lest we might stumble upon people who might misinterpret our intentions.

I was determined to try whether, by taking away that scare-crow, Fasil's horse, from before us, and riding him myself, things would change for the better: this I distinctly saw, that Woldo would have wished the horse to have gone

rather without a rider, and this I had observed the night I went to the cataract from Goutto. Sitting on the king's saddle, or in his seat at Gondar, is high-treason; and Woldo thought, at all times, but now especially, that his master was inferior to no king upon earth. I even attributed to that last expedition at Goutto his silence and apparent sickness ever since; but in this last circumstance I found afterwards that I was mistaken: be that as it would, my plan was very different from Woldo's as to the horse, he was become a favourite, and I was resolved, in the course of my journey, to improve his talents so, that he should make a better appearance on his return to Gondar, than he did when I received him from Fasil at Bamba. I compounded, as I conceived, with Woldo's scruples, by laying aside Fasil's saddle, which was a very uneasy one, besides, that it had iron rings instead of stirrups; in short, as this horse was very beautiful, (as many of the Gallahorses are) and all of one colour, which was of lead, without any spot of white, I hoped to make him an acceptable present to the king, who was passionately fond of horses. Here it may not be improper to observe, that all very great men in Abyssinia choose to ride horses of one colour only, which have no distinguishing mark whereby they may be traced in retreats, flights, or such unlucky expeditions: It is the king alone in battle who rides upon a horse distinguished by his marks, and that on purpose that he may be known.

THERE were many villages in the valley which seemed to have escaped the havoc of war, nor had they that air of poverty and misery so apparent in all the other habitations we had seen. We were pointing nearly east south-east, when we passed the small river Googueri, which, like all the others

on this side of the mountain, falls into the Abola. We then left the valley of Abola on our right, and began to travel along the sides of the mountains on the west. At three quarters after eight we passed a violent torrent called Karnachiuli, which falls from north-east into the Abola. At nine we again descended into the valley, and, a few minutes after, came to the banks of the Caccino, which flows from the north just above, and joins the Abola. Here we halted for a little to rest our men, and to adjust thoroughly the minutes of our journey, that the whole might appear in a distinct manner in the map that I intended to make on my return to Gondar.

At half past nine we again set out, and, a few minutes after, passed the river Abola, which gives its name to the valley into which we had descended, and receives many lesser streams, and is of considerable breadth. I could discover no traces of fish either in it or in any river since we left the Affar, from which circumstance I apprehend, that, in these torrents from the mountains, almost dry in summer, and which run with vast rapidity in winter, the spawn and fish are both destroyed in different seasons by different causes.

AFTER coasting some little time along the side of the valley, we began to ascend a mountain on the right, from which falls almost perpendicularly a small, but very violent stream, one of the principal branches of the Abola, which empties itself into the Nile, together with the other branch, a still more considerable stream, coming from east south-east along the valley between Litchambara and Aformasha. At eleven o'clock our course was south by east, and we passed

near a church, dedicated to the Virgin, on our left. The climate seemed here most agreeably mild, the country covered with the most lively verdure, the mountains with beautiful trees and shrubs, loaded with extraordinary fruits and flowers. I found my spirits very much raised with these pleasing scenes, as were those of all my servants, who were, by our conversation, made geographers enough to know we were near approaching to the end of our journey. Both Srates and I, out of the *Lamb's* hearing, had shot a variety of curious birds and beasts. All but Woldo seemed to have acquired new strength and vigour. He continued in his air of despondency, and seemed every day to grow more and more weak. At a quarter past eleven we arrived at the top of the mountain, where we, for the first time, came in sight of Sacala, which extends in the plain below from west to the point of south, and there joins with the village of Geesh.

SACALA, full of small low villages, which, however, had escaped the ravages of the late war, is the eastermost branch of the Agows, and famous for the best honey. The small river Kebezza, running from the east, serves as a boundary between Sacala and Aformasha; after joining two other rivers, the Gonretti and the Googueri, which we presently came to, after a short course nearly from S. E. to N. W. it falls into the Nile a little above its junction with the Abola.

At three-quarters past eleven we crossed the river Kebezza, and descended into the plain of Sacala; in a few minutes we also passed the Googueri, a more considerable stream than the former; it is about sixty feet broad, and perhaps eighteen inches deep, very clear and rapid, running over a  
rugged,

rugged, uneven bottom of black rock. At a quarter past twelve we halted on a small eminence, where the market of Sacala is held every Saturday. Horned cattle, many of the greatest beauty possible, with which all this country abounds; large asses, the most useful of all beasts for riding or carriage; honey, butter, ensete for food, and a manufacture of the leaf of that plant, painted with different colours like Mosaic work, are here exposed to sale in great plenty; the butter and honey, indeed, are chiefly carried to Gondar, or to Buré; but Damot, Mairsha, and Gojam likewise take a considerable quantity of all these commodities.

At a quarter after one o'clock we passed the river Gummerti, the boundary of the plain: we were now ascending a very steep and rugged mountain, the worst pass we had met on our whole journey. We had no other path but a road made by the sheep or the goats, which did not seem to have been frequented by men, for it was broken, full of holes, and in other places obstructed with large stones that seemed to have been there from the creation. It must be added to this, that the whole was covered with thick wood, which often occupied the very edge of the precipices on which we stood, and we were everywhere stopt and entangled by that execrable thorn the kantuffa, and several other thorns and brambles nearly as inconvenient. We ascended, however, with great alacrity, as we conceived we were surmounting the last difficulty after the many thousands we had already overcome. Just above this almost impenetrable wood, in a very romantic situation, stands St Michael, in a hollow space like a niche between two hills of the same height, and from which it is equally distant. This church has been unfrequented for many years; the excuse they

make is, that they cannot procure frankincense, without which, it seems, their mass or service cannot be celebrated ; but the truth is, they are still Pagans ; and the church, having been built in memory of a victory over them above a hundred years ago, is not a favourite object before their eyes, but a memorial of their inferiority and misfortune. This church is called St Michael Sacala, to distinguish it from another more to the southward, called St Michael Geesh.

At three quarters after one we arrived at the top of the mountain, whence we had a distinct view of all the remaining territory of Sacala, the mountain Geesh, and church of St Michael Geesh, about a mile and a half distant from St Michael Sacala, where we then were. We saw, immediately below us, the Nile itself, strangely diminished in size, and now only a brook that had scarcely water to turn a mill. I could not satiate myself with the sight, revolving in my mind all those classical prophecies that had given the Nile up to perpetual obscurity and concealment. The lines of the poet came immediately into my mind, and I enjoyed here, for the first time, the triumph which already, by the protection of Providence, and my own intrepidity, I had gained over all that were powerful, and all that were learned, since the remotest antiquity:—

*Arcanum natura caput non prodidit ulli,  
Nec licuit populis parvum te, Nile, videre ;  
Amovitque sinus, et gentes maluit ortus  
Mirari, quam nōsse tuos.———*

LUCAN.

I was

I was awakened out of this delightful reverie by an alarm that we had lost Woldo our guide. Though I long had expected something from his behaviour, I did not think, for his own sake, it could be his intention to leave us. The servants could not agree when they last saw him: Strates and Aylo's servant were in the wood shooting, and we found by the gun that they were not far from us; I was therefore in hopes that Woldo, though not at all fond of fire-arms, might be in their company; but it was with great dissatisfaction I saw them appear without him. They said, that, about an hour before, they had seen some extraordinary large, rough apes, or monkeys, several of which were walking upright, and all without tails; that they had gone after them thro' the wood till they could scarce get out again; but they did not remember to have seen Woldo at parting. Various conjectures immediately followed; some thought he had resolved to betray and rob us; some conceived it was an instruction of Fasil's to him, in order to our being treacherously murdered; some again supposed he was slain by the wild beasts, especially those apes or baboons, whose voracity, size, and fierce appearance were exceedingly magnified, especially by Strates, who had not the least doubt, if Woldo had met them, but that he would be so entirely devoured, that we might seek in vain without discovering even a fragment of him. For my part, I began to think that he had been really ill when he first complained, and that the sickness might have overcome him upon the road; and this, too, was the opinion of Ayto Aylo's servant, who said, however, with a significant look, that he could not be far off; we therefore sent him, and one of the men that drove the mules, back to seek after him; and they had not gone but a few hundred yards when they found him coming, but so decrepid



decrepid, and so very ill, that he said he could go no farther than the church, where he was positively resolved to take up his abode that night. I felt his pulse, examined every part about him, and saw, I thought evidently, that nothing ailed him. Without losing my temper, however, I told him firmly, That I perceived he was an impostor; that he should consider that I was a physician, as he knew I cured his master's first friend, Wellela Yafous: that the feeling of his hand told me as plain as his tongue could have done, that nothing ailed him; that it told me likewise he had in his heart some prank to play, which would turn out very much to his disadvantage. He seemed dismayed after this, said little, and only desired us to halt for a few minutes, and he should be better; for, says he, it requires strength in us all to pass another great hill before we arrive at Geesh.

“Look you, said I, lying is to no purpose; I know where Geesh is as well as you do, and that we have no more mountains or bad places to pass through; therefore, if you choose to stay behind, you may; but to-morrow I shall inform Wellela Yafous at Buré of your behaviour.” I said this with the most determined air possible, and left them, walking as hard as I could down to the ford of the Nile. Woldo remained above with the servants, who were loading their mules; he seemed to be perfectly cured of his lameness, and was in close conversation with Aytó Aylo's servant for about ten minutes, which I did not choose to interrupt, as I saw that man was already in possession of part of Woldo's secret. This being over, they all came down to me, as I was sketching a branch of a yellow rose-tree, a number of which hang over the ford.

THE whole company passed without disturbing me ; and Woldo, seeming to walk as well as ever, ascended a gentle-rising hill, near the top of which is St Michael Geesh. The Nile here is not four yards over, and not above four inches deep where we crossed ; it was indeed become a very trifling brook, but ran swiftly over a bottom of small stones, with hard, black rock appearing amidst them : it is at this place very easy to pass, and very limpid, but, a little lower, full of inconsiderable falls ; the ground rises gently from the river to the southward, full of small hills and eminences, which you ascend and descend almost imperceptibly. The whole company had halted on the north side of St Michael's church, and there I reached them without affecting any hurry.

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon, but the day had been very hot for some hours, and they were sitting in the shade of a grove of magnificent cedars, intermixed with some very large and beautiful casso-trees, all in the flower ; the men were lying on the grass, and the beasts fed, with the burdens on their backs, in most luxuriant herbage. I called for my herbary \*, to lay the rose-branch I had in my hand smoothly, that it might dry without spoiling the shape ; having only drawn its general form, the pistil and stamina, the finer parts of which (though very necessary in classing the plant) crumble and fall off, or take different forms in drying, and therefore should always be secured by drawing while green. I just said indifferently to Woldo in passing, that I was glad to see him recovered ; that he would presently be well, and should fear nothing. He then got up,

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\* Hortus Siccus, a large book for extending and preserving dry plants.

and desired to speak with me alone, taking Aylo's servant along with him. "Now, said I, very calmly, I know by your face you are going to tell me a lie. I do swear to you solemnly, you never, by that means, will obtain any thing from me, no not so much as a good word; truth and good behaviour will get you every thing; what appears a great matter in your sight is not perhaps of such value in mine; but nothing except truth and good behaviour will answer to you; now I know for a certainty you are no more sick than I am."—"Sir, said he, with a very confident look, you are right; I did counterfeit; I neither have been, nor am I at present any way out of order; but I thought it best to tell you so, not to be obliged to discover another reason that has much more weight with me why I cannot go to Geesh, and much less shew myself at the sources of the Nile, which I confess are not much beyond it, though I declare to you there is still a *bill* between you and those sources."—"And pray, said I calmly, what is this mighty reason? have you had a dream, or a vision in that trance you fell into when you lagged behind below the church of St Michael Sacala?" "No, says he, it is neither trance, nor dream, nor devil either; I wish it was no worse; but you know as well as I, that my master Fasil defeated the Agows at the battle of Banja. I was there with my master, and killed several men, among whom some were of the Agows of this village Geesh, and you know the usage of this country, when a man, in these circumstances, falls into their hands, his blood must pay for their blood.

I BURST out into a violent fit of laughter which very much disconcerted him. "There, said I, did not I say to you it was a lie that you was going to tell me? do not think I disbelieve

lieve or dispute with you the vanity of having killed men; many men were slain at that battle; somebody must, and you may have been the person who slew them; but do you think that I can believe that Fasil, so deep in that account of blood, could rule the Agows in the manner he does, if he could not put a servant of his in safety among them 20 miles from his residence; do you think I can believe this?" "Come, come, said Aylo's servant to Woldo, did you not hear that truth and good behaviour will get you every thing you ask? Sir, continues he, I see this affair vexes you, and what this foolish man wants will neither make you richer nor poorer; he has taken a great desire for that crimson silk-fash which you wear about your middle. I told him to stay till you went back to Gondar; but he says he is to go no farther than to the house of Shalaka Welled Amlac in Maittha, and does not return to Gondar; I told him to stay till you had put your mind at ease, by seeing the fountains of the Nile, which you are so anxious about. He said, after that had happened, he was sure you would not give it him, for you seemed to think little of the cataract at Goutto, and of all the fine rivers and churches which he had shewn you; except the head of the Nile shall be finer than all these, when, in reality, it will be just like another river, you will then be dissatisfied, and not give him the fash."

I THOUGHT there was something very natural in these suspicions of Woldo; besides, he said he was certain, that, if ever the fash came into the sight of Welled Amlac, by some means or other, he would get it into his hands. This rational discourse had pacified me a little; the fash was a handsome one; but it must have been fine indeed to have stood for a minute between me and the accomplishment of my

wishes. I laid my hand then upon the pistols that stuck in my girdle, and drew them out to give them to one of my suite, when Woldo, who apprehended it was for another purpose, ran some paces back, and hid himself behind Aylq's servant. We were all diverted at this fright, but none so much as Strates, who thought himself revenged for the alarm he had given him by falling through the roof of the house at Goutto. After having taken off my sash, "Here is your sash, Woldo, said I; but mark what I have said, and now most seriously repeat to you, Truth and good behaviour will get any thing from me; but if, in the course of this journey, you play one trick more, though ever so trifling, I will bring such a vengeance upon your head that you shall not be able to find a place to hide it in, when not the sash only will be taken from you, but your skin also will follow it: remember what happened to the seis at Bamba."

He took the sash, but seemed terrified at the threat, and began to make apologies. "Come, come, said I, we understand each other; no more words; it is now late, lose no more time, but carry me to Geesh, and the head of the Nile directly, without preamble, and shew me the hill that separates me from it. He then carried me round to the south side of the church, out of the grove of trees that surrounded it, "This is the hill, says he, looking archly, that, when you was on the other side of it, was between you and the fountains of the Nile; there is no other; look at that hillock of green sod in the middle of that watery spot, it is in that the two fountains of the Nile are to be found: Geesh is on the face of the rock where yon green trees are: if you go the length of the fountains pull off your shoes as you did the other day, for these people are all Pagans, worse than

than those that were at the ford, and they believe in nothing that you believe, but only in this river, to which they pray every day as if it were God ; but this perhaps you may do likewise." Half undressed as I was by loss of my sash, and throwing my shoes off, I ran down the hill towards the little island of green fods, which was about two hundred yards distant ; the whole side of the hill was thick grown over with flowers, the large bulbous roots of which appearing above the surface of the ground, and their skins coming off on treading upon them, occasioned two very severe falls before I reached the brink of the marsh ; I after this came to the island of green turf, which was in form of an altar, apparently the work of art, and I stood in rapture over the principal fountain which rises in the middle of it.

It is easier to guess than to describe the situation of my mind at that moment—standing in that spot which had baffled the genius, industry, and inquiry of both ancients and moderns, for the course of near three thousand years. Kings had attempted this discovery at the head of armies, and each expedition was distinguished from the last, only by the difference of the numbers which had perished, and agreed alone in the disappointment which had uniformly, and without exception, followed them all. Fame, riches, and honour, had been held out for a series of ages to every individual of those myriads these princes commanded, without having produced one man capable of gratifying the curiosity of his sovereign, or wiping off this stain upon the enterprise and abilities of mankind, or adding this desideratum for the encouragement of geography. Though a mere private Briton, I triumphed here, in my own mind, over kings and their armies ; and every comparison was leading

leading nearer and nearer to presumption, when the place itself where I stood, the object of my vain-glory, suggested what depressed my short-lived triumphs. I was but a few minutes arrived at the sources of the Nile, through numberless dangers and sufferings, the least of which would have overwhelmed me but for the continual goodness and protection of Providence; I was, however, but then half through my journey, and all those dangers which I had already passed, awaited me again on my return. I found, a despondency gaining ground fast upon me, and blasting the crown of laurels I had too rashly woven for myself. I resolved therefore to divert, till I could on more solid reflection overcome its progress.

I saw Strates expecting me on the side of the hill. "Strates, said I, faithful squire, come and triumph with your Don Quixote at that island of Baratania where we have wisely and fortunately brought ourselves; come and triumph with me over all the kings of the earth, all their armies, all their philosophers, and all their heroes."—"Sir, says Strates, I do not understand a word of what you say, and as little what you mean: you very well know I am no scholar; but you had much better leave that bog, come into the house, and look after Woldo; I fear he has something further to seek than your faith, for he has been talking with the old devil-worshipper ever since we arrived."—"Did they speak secretly together, said I?"—"Yes, Sir, they did, I assure you."—"And in whispers, Strates!"—"As for that, replied he, they need not have been at the pains; they understand one another, I suppose, and the devil their master understands them both; but as for me I comprehend their discourse no more than if it was Greck, *as they say*. Greck!

I

says

says he, I am an afs; I should know well enough what they said if they spoke Greek."—"Come, said I, take a draught of this excellent water, and drink with me a health to his majesty king George III. and a long line of princes." I had in my hand a large cup made of a cocoa-nut shell, which I procured in Arabia, and which was brim-full. He drank to the king speedily and chearfully, with the addition of, "Confusion to his enemies," and tossed up his cap with a loud huzza. "Now friend, said I, here is to a more humble, but still a sacred name, here is to—Maria!" He asked if that was the Virgin Mary? I answered, "In faith, I believe so, Strates." He did not speak, but only gave a humph of disapprobation.

THE day had been very hot, and the altercation I had with Woldo had occasioned me to speak so much that my thirst, without any help from curiosity, led me to these frequent libations at this long sought-for spring, the most ancient of all altars. "Strates, said I, here is to our happy return. Come, friend, you are yet two toasts behind me; can you ever be fatiated with this excellent water?"—"Look you, Sir, says he very gravely, as for king George I drank to him with all my heart, to his wife, to his children, to his brothers and sisters, God blefs them all! Amen;—but as for the Virgin Mary, as I am no Papist, I beg to be excused from drinking healths which *my church* does not drink. As for our happy return, God knows, there is no one wishes it more sincerely than I do, for I have been long weary of this beggarly country. But you must forgive me if I refuse to drink any more water. They say these savages pray over that hole every morning to the devil, and I am afraid I feel his horns in my belly already, from the great draught o



that hellish water I drank first."—It was, indeed, as cold water as ever I tasted. "Come, come, said I, don't be peevish, I have but one toast more to drink."—"Peevish, or not peevish, replied Strates, a drop of it never again shall cross my throat: there is no humour in this; no joke; shew us something • pleasant as you used to do; but there is no jest in meddling with devil-worshippers, witchcraft, and enchantments, to bring some disease upon one's self here, so far from home in the fields. No, no, as many toasts in wine as you please, or better in brandy, but no more water for Strates. I am sure I have done myself harm already with these follies—God forgive me!"—"Then, said I, I will drink it alone, and you are henceforward unworthy of the name of Greek; you do not even deserve that of a Christian." Holding the full cup then to my head, "Here is to Catharine, empress of all the Russias, and success to her heroes at Paros; and hear my prediction from this altar to-day, Ages shall not pass, before this ground, whereon I now stand, will become a flourishing part of her dominions."

He leaped on this a yard from the ground. "If the old gentleman has whispered you this, says he, out of the well, he has not kept you long time waiting; tell truth and shame the devil, is indeed the proverb, but truth is truth, wherever it comes from; give me the cup, I will drink that health though I should die." He then held out both his hands. "Strates, said I, be in no such haste; remember the water is enchanted by devil-worshippers; there is no jesting with these, and you are far from home, and in the fields, you may catch some disease, especially if you drink the Virgin Mary; God forgive you. Remember the horns the first draught produced; they may with this come entirely through

through and through.”—“The cup, the cup, says he, and—fill it full; I defy the devil, and trust in St George and the dragon.—Here is to Catharine, empress of all the Russias, confusion to her enemies, and damnation to all at Paros.”—“Well, friend, said I, you was long in resolving, but you have done it at last to some purpose; I am sure I did not drink damnation to all at Paros.”—“Ah, says he, but *I did*, and will do it again—Damnation to all at Paros, and Cyprus, and Rhodes, Crete, and Mytilene into the bargain: Here it goes with all my heart. Amen, so be it.”—“And who do you think, said I, are at Paros?”—“Pray, who should be there, says he, but Turks and devils, the worst race of monsters and oppressors in the Levant; I have been at Paros myself; was you ever there?”—“Whether I was ever there or not is no matter, said I; the empress’s fleet, and an army of Russians, are now possibly there; and here you, without provocation, have drank damnation to the Russian fleet and army who have come so far from home, and are at this moment sword in hand to restore you to your liberty, and the free exercise of your religion; did not I tell you, you was no Greek, and scarcely deserved the name of Christian?”—“No, no, Sir, cries Strates, for God’s sake do not say so, I would rather die. I did not understand you about Paros; there was no malice in my heart against the Russians. God will bless them, and my folly can do them no harm—Huzza, Catharine, and victory!” whilst he tossed his cap into the air.

A NUMBER of the Agows had appeared upon the hill, just before the valley, in silent wonder what Strates and I were doing at the altar. Two or three only had come down to the edge of the swamp, had seen the grimaces and

action of Strates, and heard him huzza ; on which they had asked Woldo, as he entered into the village, what was the meaning of all this? Woldo told them, that the man was out of his senses, and had been bit by a mad dog ; which reconciled them immediately to us. They, moreover, said, he would be infallibly cured by the Nile ; but the custom, after meeting with such a misfortune, was to drink the water in the morning fasting. I was very well pleased both with this turn Woldo gave the action, and the remedy we stumbled upon by mere accident, which discovered a connection, believed to subsist at this day, between this river and its ancient governor the dog-star.





## CHAP. XIII.

*Attempts of the Ancients to discover the Source of the Nile—No Discovery made in latter Times—No Evidence of the Jesuits having arrived there—Kircher's Account fabulous—Discovery completely made by the Author.*

**F**AR in antiquity as history or tradition can lead us, farther still beyond the reach of either, (if we believe it was the first subject of hieroglyphics) begins the inquiry into the origin, cause of increase, and course, of this famous river. It is one of the few phænomena in natural history that ancient philosophers employed themselves in investigating, and people of all ranks seemed to have joined in the research with a degree of perseverance very uncommon; but still this discovery, though often attempted under the most favourable circumstances, has as constantly miscarried; it has baffled the endeavours of all ages, and

at last come down, as great a secret as ever, to these latter times of bold and impartial inquiry.

THOUGH Egypt was not created by the Nile, it was the first part that received benefit from it; it was there, in the time of its overflowing, that it appeared in all its beauty, and Egypt measured its prosperity or desolation by the abundance or scantiness of this stream. It was not, however, in Egypt the inquiries into the time and cause of its inundation began; all these were settled and reduced to rule before a city was built within the reach of the inundation.

MAN, that knew not the cause, was also ignorant of the limits of that inundation, having only in his mind a tradition of deluges that had destroyed the earth, traces of which appeared on every hill. He was with reason astonished to see, that, wild and wide as the torrent appeared, it was subject to the controul of some power that prohibited it from irregularity in the time of its coming, and forbade it to destroy the land it was destined to enrich; they saw it subside within its banks, and overflow no more after it had afforded to husbandry the utmost advantage it could receive. But what the controuling power was they knew not, consequently could never divine whether this regularity was transitory or perpetual; whether it was not liable, at some time, to break its bonds, and sweep both man and his labours together into the ocean.

WHETHER the Nile was constant to its time of rising, whether it did not revolve in some cycle or period, or whether, arrived at a certain number of inundations, it was not to stop and overflow no more, was what could only be determined.

mined by the investigation of the cause, and the observations of a series of years. Before this was thoroughly settled and known, the farmer might perhaps cultivate the plain of Egypt, but would not build there; he would fix his dwelling on the mountain in defiance of the flood; and that this was so, is evident from what we saw at Thebes, which the Aborigines did not build, as we see thousands of caves dug out of solid rock that were the dwellings of the first inhabitants, the Troglodytes, beyond Meroë.

THE philosophers of *Meroë* seem therefore to have been the first that undertook the compiling a series of observations, which should teach their posterity the proper times in which they could settle in, and cultivate Egypt, without fear of danger from the Nile. That island, full of flocks and shepherds, under a sky perpetually cloudless, having a twilight of short duration, was placed between the Nile and Astaboras, where the two rivers collect the waters that fall in the east and the west of Ethiopia, and mix together in a latitude where the tropical rains cease; this land was too high to be overflowed by the Nile, but near enough to behold every alteration in that river's increase from the instant it happened.

SIRIUS, the brightest star in the Heavens, probably the largest, perhaps the nearest to us, in either case the most obvious and useful for the present purpose, was immediately vertical to Meroë; and it did not long escape observation, that the heliacal rising of the dog-star was found to be the instant when all Egypt was to prepare for the reception of a stranger-flood, without which the husbandman's labour and expectation of harvest were in vain. The fields were  
dusty

dufty and desert, the farms without tenants, the tenants without seed, the houses perhaps situated in the middle of the inundation, when, at a stated time, this most brilliant sign shone forth to warn the master to procure a peasant for his field, the peasant to procure seed for his tenement, and the stranger to remove his habitation from a situation soon destined to be laid wholly under water.

Nothing could be more natural than the inquiries how the encrease of the flood was thus connected with the rising of the dog-star; many useful discoveries were therefore probably made in search after this, but the cause of the inundation remained still undiscovered; at last the effects being found regular, and the efficient cause inscrutable, no wonder if gratitude transferred to the star a portion of respect for the benefits they were persuaded they received from its influence. Though these observations were such as concerned Egypt and Nubia alone, yet from Egypt they passed as objects proper for inquiry, as problems of the greatest consequence to philosophers, and as phenomena worthy the attention of all that studied nature.

A GREAT step towards the accounting for these phenomena was believed to be the discovery of the Nile's source, and this, as it was attended with very considerable difficulties, was thought therefore to be a proper object of investigation, even by kings, who discovered nations by conquering them, and by their power, revenue, and armies, removed most of those obstacles which, succeeding each others in detail, weary the diligence, overcome the courage, and baffle the endeavours of the most intrepid and persevering travellers.

SESOSTRIS, one of the earliest and greatest conquerors of antiquity, is mentioned, amidst all his victories, earnestly to have desired to penetrate to the head of the Nile, as a glory he preferred to almost universal monarchy :—

*Venit ad occasum, mundique extrema Sesostris,  
Et Pharios currus regum cervicibus egit :  
Antè tamen vestros amnes Rhodanumque, Padumque,  
Quàm Nilum de fonte bibit.*—————

LUCAN.

CAMBYSES' attempt to penetrate into Ethiopia, and the defeat of his schemes, I have already narrated at sufficient length \*.

—————*Vesanus in ortus*  
*Cambyſes longi populos pervenit ad ævi,  
Deſectusque epulis, & paſtus cæde ſuorum  
Ignoto te, Nile, redit.*—————

LUCAN.

THE attention paid by Alexander, the next prince who attempted an expedition towards these unknown fountains, merits a little more of our consideration. After he had conquered Egypt, and was arrived at the temple of Jupiter Ammon, (the celebrated and ancient deity of the shepherds) in the Theban desert, the first question he asked was concerning the spot where the Nile rose. Having received from the priests sufficient directions for attempting the discovery, he is said, as the next very sensible step, to have chosen natives of Ethiopia as the likeliest people to succeed in the search he had commanded them to make :—

*Summus*


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\* Vol. II. b. ii. chap.



*Summus Alexander regum, quem Memphis adorat,  
Invidit Nilo, misitque per ultima terræ  
Æthiopum lætos : illos rubicunda perusti  
Zona poli tenuit, Nilum videre calentem.*

LUCAN.

THESE Ethiopians, parting from their temple in the desert of Elvah, or Oasis, or, which will come to the same thing, from the banks of the Nile, or Thebes, would hold nearly the same course as Poncet had done, till they fell in with the Nile about Moscho in the kingdom of Dongola; they would continue the same route till they came to Halfaia, where the Bahar el Abiad (or white river) joins the Nile at Hojila, five miles above that town; and, to avoid the mountains of Kuara, they would continue on the west side of the Nile, between it and the Bahar el Abiad; and, keeping the Nile close on their left, they would follow its direction south to the mountains of Fazuclo, through countries where its course must necessarily be known. After having passed the great chain of mountains, called Dyre and Tegla, between lat.  $11^{\circ}$  and  $12^{\circ}$  N. where are the great cataracts, they again came into the flat country of the Gongas, as far as Bizamo, nearly in  $9^{\circ}$  N. there the river, leaving its hitherto constant direction, N. and S. turns due E. and surrounds Gojam,

It is probable the discoverers, always looking for it to the south, took this unusual sudden turn east to be only a winding of the river, which would soon be compensated by an equal return to the west where they would meet it again; they therefore continued their journey south, till near the line, and never saw it more, as they could have no possible notion

it had turned back behind them, and that they had left it as far north as lat.  $11^{\circ}$ . They reported then to Alexander what was truth, that they had ascended the Nile as far south as lat.  $9^{\circ}$ , where it unexpectedly took its course to the east, and was seen no more. The river, moreover, was not known, nor to be heard of near the Line, or farther southward, nor was it diminished in size, nor had it given any symptom they were near its source; they had found the Nile *calentem*, (warm) while they expected its rise among melting snows.

THIS discovery (for so far it was one) of the course of the river to the east, seems to have made a strong impression on Alexander's mind, so that when he arrived at near the head of the Indus, then swelled with the thawing snows of mount Caucasus, and overflowing in summer, he thought he was arrived at the source of this famous river the Nile which he had before seen in the west, and rejoiced at it exceedingly, as the noblest of his achievements\*; he immediately wrote to acquaint his mother of it; but being soon convinced of his error, and being far above propagating a falsehood, even for his own glory, he instantly erased what he had wrote upon that subject. This however did not entirely dissatisfy Alexander, for he proposed an expedition in person towards these fountains, if he had returned from India in safety.

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\* Arrianus de Exped. Alexandri, lib. vi.

*-Non illi flamma, nec undæ,  
 Nec sterilis Libye, nec Syrticus obstitit Ammon.  
 Iffet in occasus, mundi devexa secutus:  
 Ambissetque polos, Nilumque a fonte bibisset:  
 Occurrit suprema dies, naturaque solum.  
 Hunc potuit finem vesano ponere regi.*

LUCAN.

It must no doubt seem preposterous to those that are not very conversant with the classics, that a prince so well instructed as Alexander himself was, who had with him in his army many philosophers, geographers, and astronomers, and was in constant correspondence with Aristotle, a man of almost universal knowledge, that, after having seen the Nile in Egypt coming from the south, he should think he was arrived at the head of it while on the banks of the Indus, so far to the N. E. of its Ethiopian course. This difficulty, however, has a very easy solution in the prejudices of those times. The ancients were incorrigible as to their error in opinion concerning two seas.

THE Caspian Sea they had sailed through in several directions, and had almost marched round it; and whilst they conquered kingdoms between it and the sea, its water was sweet, it neither ebbed nor flowed, and yet they most ridiculously would have it to be part of the ocean. On the other hand, they obstinately persisted in believing that, from the east coast of Africa, about latitude 15° south, a neck of land ran east and north-east, and joined the peninsula of India, and by that means made this part of the ocean a lake. In vain ships of different nations sailed for ages to Sofala, and saw no such land; this only made them remove the  
 I neck

neck of land further to the south ; and though Eudoxus had sailed from the Red Sea around the Cape of Good Hope, which must have totally destroyed the possibility of the existence of that land supposed to join the two continents, rather than allow this, they neglected the information of this navigator, and treated it as a fable.

It was the constant opinion of the Greeks, that no river could rise in the torrid zone, as also, that the melting of snow was the cause of the overflowing of all rivers in the heat of summer, and so of the Nile among the rest ; when, therefore, Alexander heard from his discoverers, that the Nile, about latitude 9°, ran straight to the east, and returned no more, he imagined the river's course was eastward through the imaginary neck of land inclosing the imaginary lake, and joining the peninsula of India, and that the river, after it had crossed, continued north till it came within reach of the thawing of the snows of Mount Caucasus ; and this was also the opinion of Ptolemy the geographer.

PTOLEMY PHILADELPHUS, the second of those princes who had succeeded to the throne of Alexander in Egypt, was the next who marched into Ethiopia with an army against the Shangalla. His object was not only to discover the source of the Nile, but also to procure a perpetual supply of elephants to enable him to cope with the kings of Syria. The success of this expedition we have related in the first volume, book ii. chap. v.

PTOLEMY EVERGETES, his successor, in the 27th year of his reign, being in peace with all his neighbours, undertook an expedition to Ethiopia. His design was certainly

to discover the fountains of the Nile, in which he had probably succeeded had he not mistaken the river itself. He supposed the Siris, now the Tacazzé, was the Nile, and, ascending in the direction of its stream, he came to Axum, the capital of the province of Siré and of Ethiopia. But the story he tells about the snow which he found knee-deep on the mountains of Samen, makes me question whether he ever crossed the Siris, or was himself an ocular witness of what he says he observed there.

CÆSAR, between the acquisition of a rich and powerful kingdom, and the enjoyment of the finest woman in the world, the queen of it, is said to have employed so interesting an interval in a calm inquiry after the source of this river, and, in so doing at such a time, surely has paid it a greater compliment than it ever yet received from any that attempted the discovery. On that night, which completed the destruction of the Egyptian monarchy, it is said this was the topic upon which he entertained the learned of Alexandria at supper; addressing himself to Achoreus, high priest of the Nile, he says,

————— *Nilil est, quod noscere malim,*

*Quam fluvii causas, per secula tanta latentis,*

*Ignotumque caput: spes sit mihi certa videndi*

*Niliacos fontes, bellum civile relinquam.*

LUCAN.

THE poet here pays Cæsar a compliment upon his curiosity, or desire of knowledge, very much at the expence of his patriotism; for he makes him declare, in so many words, that he considered making war with his country as the  
greatest

greatest pleasure of his life, never to be abandoned, but for that superior gratification—the discovery of the fountains of the Nile.

ACHOREUS, proud of being referred to on such a subject by such a person, enters into a detail of information.

*Quæ tibi noscendi Nilum, Romane, cupido est,  
Hæc Phariis, Persisque fuit, Macedumque tyrannis :  
Nullaque non ætas voluit conferre futuris  
Notitiam : sed vincit adhuc natura latendi.*

LUCAN

NERO, as we are told, sent two centurions in search of this river, and on their return they made their report in presence of Seneca, who does not seem to have greatly distinguished himself by his inquiries. They reported, that after having gone a very long way, they came to a king of Ethiopia, who furnished them with necessaries and assistance, and with his recommendations they arrived at some other kingdoms next to these, and then came to immense lakes, the end of which was unknown to the natives, nor did any one ever hope to find it : this was all the satisfaction Nero procured, and it is probable these centurions went not far, but were discouraged, and turned back with a trumped-up story invented to cover their want of spirit, for we know now that there are no such lakes between Egypt and the source of the Nile, but the lake Tzana, or Dembea, and while on the banks of this, they might have seen the country beyond, and on every side of it \* ; but I rather think no such attempt

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\* Another reason why I think this journey of the centurions is fictitious is, that they say the distance between Syene and Meroë is 660 miles. Plin. lib. 6. cap. 29.

attempt was made, unless they endeavoured to pass the country of the Shangalla about the end of June or July, when that province, as I have already said, is absolutely impassible, by the rapid vegetation of the trees, and the ground being all laid under water, which they might have mistaken for a series of lakes.

AFTER all these great efforts, the learned of antiquity began to look upon the discovery as desperate, and not to be attained, for which reason both poets and historians speak of it in a strain of despondency:—

*Secreto de fonte cadens ; qui semper inani  
Quaerendus ratione latet, nec contigit ulli,  
Hoc vidisse caput, fertur sine teste creatus.*

CLAUDIAN.

And Pliny, as late as the time of Trajan, says; that these fountains were in his time utterly unknown—*Nilus incertis ortus fontibus, in per desertis et ardentia, et immenso longitudinis spatio ambulans* \*,—nor was there any other attempt made later by the ancients.

FROM this it is obvious, that none of the ancients ever made this discovery of the source of the Nile. They gave it up entirely, and *caput Nili quaerere* became a proverb, marking the difficulty, or rather the impossibility, of any undertaking. Let us now examine the pretensions of the moderns.

THE

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\* Pliny, Nat. Hist. lib. v. cap. 9.

THE first in latter days who visited Abyssinia was a monk, and at the same time a merchant; he was sent by Nonnosus, ambassador of the emperor Justin, in the fifth year of the reign of that prince, that is A. D. 522. He is called Cosmas the hermit, as also Indoplaustes. Many have thought that this name was given him from his having travelled much in India, properly so called; but we have no evidence that Cosmas was ever in the Asiatic India, and I rather imagine he obtained his name from his travels in Abyssinia, called by the ancients India; he went as far as Axum, and seems to have paid proper attention to the difference of climates, nathes, and situations of places, but he arrived not at the Nile, nor did he attempt it. The province of the Agows was probably at that time inaccessible, as the court was then in Tigré at Axum, a considerable distance beyond the Tacazzé, and is to the eastward of it.

NONE of the Portuguese who first arrived in Abyssinia, neither Covillan, Roderigo de Lima, Christopher de Gama, nor the patriarch Alphonso Mendes, ever saw, or indeed pretended to have seen, the source of the Nile. At last, in the reign of Za Denghel, came Peter Paez, who laid claim to this honour; how far his pretensions are just I am now going to consider.—Paez has left a history of the mission, and some remarkable occurrences that happened in that country, in two thick volumes octavo, closely written in a plain style; copies of this work were circulated through every college and seminary of Jesuits that existed in his time, and which have been everywhere found in their libraries since the disgrace of that learned body.



ATHANASIUS KIRCHER, a Jesuit, well known for his extensive learning and voluminous writings, and still more for the rashness with which he advances the most improbable facts in natural history, is the man that first published an account of the fountains of the Nile, and, as he says, from this journal left by Peter Paez.

I MUST, however, here observe, that no relation of this kind was to be found in three copies of Peter Paez's history, to which I had access when in Italy, on my return home. One of these copies I saw at Milan, and, by the interest of friends, had an opportunity of perusing it at my leisure. The other two were at Bologna and Rome. I ran through them rapidly, attending only to the place where the description ought to have been, and where I did not find it; but having copied the first and last page of the Milan manuscript, and comparing them with these two last mentioned, I found that all the three were, word for word, the same, and none of them contained one syllable of the discovery of the source.

HOWEVER this be, I do not think it is right for me to pronounce thus much, unless I bring collateral proofs to strengthen my opinion, and to shew that no such excursion was ever pretended to have been made by that missionary, in any of his works, unless that which passed through the hand of Kircher.

ALPHONSO MENDES came into Abyssinia about a year after Paez's death. New and desirable as that discovery must have been to himself, to the pope, king of Spain, and all his great patrons in Portugal and Italy, though he wrote the history

history of the country, and of the particulars concerning the mission in great detail, and with good judgment, yet he never mentions this journey of Peter Paez, though it probably must have been conveyed to Rome and Portugal, after his inspection, and under his authority.

BALTHAZAR TELLEZ, a learned Jesuit, has wrote two volumes in folio with great candour and impartiality, considering the spirit of those times ; and he declares his work to be compiled from this history of Alphonso Mendes the patriarch, from the two volumes of Peter Paez, as well as from the regular reports made by the individuals of the company in some places, and by the provincial letters in others; to all which he had compleat access, as also to the annual reports of Peter Paez among the rest, from 1598 to 1622 ; yet Tellez makes no mention of such a discovery, though he is very particular as to the merit of each missionary during the long reign of Sultan Segued, or Socinios, which occupies more than half of the two volumes.

AFTER these strong presumptions, that Peter Paez neither made such a journey nor ever pretended it, I shall submit the account that Paez himself, or Kircher for him, has given of the expedition and consequent discovery; and if any of my reader's can persuade themselves that a man of genius, such as was Peter Paez, transported by accident to these fountains, and exulting as he does upon the discovery, the value of which he seems to have known well, could yet have given such a description as he does, I am then contented with being only the partner of Peter Paez.

BEFORE I state the account of his observations in his own, or in Kircher's words, I have one observation to make regarding the dates and time of the journey. That memorable day which has been fixed upon for the discovery, is the 21st of April 1618. The rains are then begun, and on that account the season being very unwholesome, armies, without extreme necessity, are rarely in the field; between September and February at farthest is the time the Abyssinian army is abroad from the capital, and in action.

THERE are two nations of Agows in Abyssinia, the one near the fountains of the Nile, called the Agows of Damot; the other near the head of the Tacazzé, in the province of Lasta, called the Tcheratz Agows. Now, we see from the annals of Socinios's reign, that he had several campaigns against the Agows. The first was in the fourth year of his reign, in the year 1608; his annals say it was against the Tcheratz Agow. His second campaign was in the seventh year of his reign, or 1611; that, too, was against the Agows of Lasta; so that if Peter Paez was with the emperor in either of these campaigns, he could not have seen the head of any river but that of the Tacazzé. The third campaign was in 1625, against Sacala, Geesh, and Ashoa, when the Galla made an inroad into Gojam, but retired upon the royal army's marching against them, and crossed the Nile into their own country. Socinios upon this had advanced against the Agows of Damot, then in rebellion also, and had fought with Sacala, Ashoa, and Geesh likewise, the clan immediately contiguous to the sources. Now this was surely the time when Peter Paez, or any attendant on the emperor, might have seen the fountains of the Nile in safety, as the king's army, in whole or in part, must have been encamp-  
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ed near, or perhaps upon, the very sources themselves; a place, of all other, suited for such a purpose; but this was in the year 1625, and Peter Paez died in the year 1622.

I SHALL now state, in Kircher's own words, translated into English, the description he has given, as from Paez, of the sources which he saw; and I will fairly submit, to any reader of judgment, whether this is a description he ought to be content with from an eye-witness, whether it may not suit the sources of any other river as well as those of the Nile, or whether in itself it is distinct enough to leave one clear idea behind it.

"THE river\*, at this day, by the Ethiopians is called the Abaoy; it rises in the kingdom of Gojam, in a territory called Sabala, whose inhabitants are called Agows. The source of the Nile is situated in the west part of Gojam, in the highest part of a valley, which resembles a great plain on every side, surrounded by high mountains. On the 21st of April, in the year 1618, being here, together with the king and his army, I ascended the *place*, and observed every thing with great attention; I discovered first two round fountains, each about four palms in diameter, and saw, with the greatest delight, what neither Cyrus† king of the Persians, nor Cambyfes, nor Alexander the Great, nor the famous Julius Cæsar, could ever discover. The two openings of these fountains have no issue in the plain on the top of the mountain, but flow from the root of it. The second fountain lies

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about

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\* In *Œdipo Syntagma*, l. cap. vii. p. 57.

† I never heard that Cyrus had attempted this discovery.

about a stone-cast west from the first: the inhabitants say that this whole mountain is full of water, and add, that the whole plain about the fountain is floating and unsteady, a certain mark that there is water concealed under it; for which reason, the water does not overflow at the fountain, but forces itself with great violence out at the foot of the mountain. The inhabitants, together with the emperor, who was then present with his army, maintain that that year it trembled little on account of the drought; but other years, that it trembled and overflowed so as that it could scarce be approached without danger. The breadth of the circumference may be about the cast of a sling: below the top of this mountain the people live about a league distant from the fountain to the west; and this place is called Geesh, and the fountain seems to be a cannon-shot distant from Geesh; moreover, the field where the fountain is, is upon all sides difficult of access, except on the north side, where it may be ascended with ease."

I SHALL make only a few observations upon this description, sufficient to shew that it cannot be that of Paez, or any man who had ever been in Abyssinia: there is no such place known as Sabala; he should have called it Sacala: in the Ethiopic language Sacala means the highest ridge of land, where the water falls down equally on both sides, from east and west, or from north and south. So the sharp roofs of our houses, or tops of our tents, in that manner are called Sacala, because the water runs down equally on opposite sides; so does it in the highest lands in every country, and so here in Sacala, where the Nile runs to the north, but several streams, which form the rivers Lac and Temsi, fall down the cliff, or precipice, and proceed southward in the

the plain of Ashoa about 300 feet below the level of the ground where the mountain of Geesh stands, at the very foot of which is the marsh wherein are the sources of the river.

AGAIN, neither Sacala nor Geesh are on the west side of Gojam, nor approach to these directions; as, first the high mountains of Litchambara, then the still higher of Amid Amid, are to be crossed over, before you reach Gojam from Sacala; and after descending from that high barrier of mountains called Amid Amid, you come into the province of Dامت, when the whole breadth of that province is still between you and the west part of Gojam. These are mistakes which it is almost impossible to make, when a man is upon the spot, in the midst of a whole army, every one capable, and surely willing (as he was a favourite of the king to give him every sort of information; nor was there probably any one there who would not have thought himself honoured to have been employed to fetch a *straw* for him from the top of Amid Amid.

BOTH the number and situations of the fountains, and the situations of the mountain and village of Geesh with respect to them, are therefore absolutely false, as the reader will observe in attending to my narrative and the map. This relation of Pacz's was in my hand the 5th of November, when I surveyed these fountains, and all the places adjacent, I measured all his distances with a gunter's chain in my own hand, and found every one of them to be imaginary; and these measures so taken, as also the journal now submitted to the public, were fairly and fully written the same day that they were made, before the close of each evening.

It is not easy to conceive what species of information Paez intends to convey to us by the observation he makes lower, "That the water, which found way at the foot of the mountain, did not flow at the top of it." It would have been very singular if it had; and I fully believe that a mountain voiding the water at its top, when it had free access to run out at its bottom, would have been one of the most curious things the two Jesuits could ever have seen in any voyage. But what mountain is it he is speaking of? he has never named any one, but has said the Nile was situated in the highest part of a plain. I cannot think he means by this that the highest part of a plain is a mountain; if he does, it is a species of description which would need an interpreter. He says again, the mountain is full of water, and trembles; and that there is a village below the top of the mountain, on the mountain itself. This I never saw; they must have cold and slippery quarters in that mountain, or whatever it is; and if he means the mountain of Geesh, there is not a village within a quarter a mile of it. The village of Geesh is in the middle of a high cliff, descending into the plain of Ashoa. The bottom of that cliff or plain is 300 feet, as I have already said, below the base of the mountain of Geesh, and the place where the fountains rise.

PAEZ next says, that it is three miles from that village of Geesh to the fountains of the Nile. Now, as my quadrant was placed in my tent, on the brink of the cliff of Geesh, it was necessary for me to measure that distance; and by allowing for it to reduce my observations to the exact spot where the sources rose, I did accordingly with a chain

measure from the brink of the precipice to the center of the altar, in which the principal fountain stands, and found it 1760 feet or 586 yards 2 feet, and this is the distance Paez calls a league, or the largest range of a shell shot from a mortar; this I do aver is an error that is absolutely impossible for any travellers to commit upon the spot, or else his narrative in general should have very little weight in point of precision.

I SHALL close these observations with one which I think must clearly evince Paez had never been upon the spot. He says the field, in which the fountains of the Nile are, is of very difficult access, the ascent to it being very steep, excepting on the north, where it is plain and easy. Now, if we look at the beginning of this description, we should think it would be the descent, not the ascent that would be troublesome; for the fountains were placed in a valley, and people rather descend into valleys than ascend into them; but supposing it a valley in which there was a field, upon which there was a mountain, and on the mountain these fountains, still I say that these mountains are nearly inaccessible on the three sides, but that the most difficult of them all is the north, the way we ascend from the plain of Gouto. From the east, by Sacala, the ascent is made from the valley of Litchambara, and from the plain of Assoa, to the south, you have the almost perpendicular craggy cliff of Geesh, covered with thorny bushes, trees, and bamboos, which conceal the mouths of the caverns; and, on the north, you have the mountains of Aformasha, thick-set with all sorts of thorny shrubs and trees, especially with the kantussa; these thickets are, moreover, full of wild beasts, especially



especially huge, long-haired baboons, which we frequently met walking upright. Through these high and difficult mountains we have only narrow paths, like those of sheep, made by the goats, or the wild beasts we are speaking of, which, after we had walked on them for a long space, landed us frequently at the edge of some valley, or precipice, and forced us to go back again to search for a new road. From towards Zzegam, to the westward, and from the plain where the river winds so much, is the only easy access to the fountains of the Nile, and they that ascend to them by this way will not think even that approach too easy.

It remains only for me to say, that neither have the Jesuits, (Paez his brethren in the mission, and his contemporaries) made any geographical use of this discovery, either in longitude or latitude; nor have the historians of his society, who have followed afterwards, with all the information and documents before them, thought proper even to quote his travels; it will not be easy, from the authority of a man like Athanasius Kircher, writing at Rome, to support the reality of such a discovery, not to be found in the genuine writings of Peter Paez himself. With such a voyage, if it had been real, there should have been published at least an itinerary, and most of the Jesuits were capable enough to have made a rough observation of longitude and latitude, in the country where they resided, for near one hundred years. Add to this, no observation appears from any Jesuit of the idolatry or pagan worship, which prevailed near the source of the Nile, and this would seem to have been their immediate province.

FROM Dancaz they might have taken very properly their departure, and, by a compass, the use of which was then well known to the Portuguese, they might have kept their route to those fountains without much trouble, and, with a sufficient degree of exactness, to shew all the world the road by which they went. They were not fifty miles distant from Geesh when at Gorgora, and they have erred above sixty, which is ten miles more than the whole distance; this happened because they sought the fountains in Gojam, from which, at Gorgora, they knew themselves to be at that distance, and where the source of the Nile never was.

• WHEN I set out from Gondar, whose latitude and longitude I had first well ascertained, I thought in such a pursuit as this, where local discovery was the only thing sought after in all ages, that the best way was to substitute perhaps a drier journal, or itinerary, to a more pleasant account; with this view I kept the length of my journeys each day by a watch, and my direction by the compass. I did observe, indeed, many altitudes of the sun and stars at Dingleber, at Kelti, and at Goutto; and lastly, I ascertained the other extreme, the sources of the Nile, by a number of observations of latitude, and by a very distinct and favourable one for the longitude: I calculated none of these celestial observations till I went back to Gondar. I returned by a different way on the other side of the Nile, and made one observation of the sun at Welled Abea Abbo, the house of Shalaka Welled Am-lac, of whom I am about to speak. Arrived at Gondar, I summed up my days journeys, reduced my bearings and distances to a plain course, as if I had been at sea, taking a mean where there was any thing doubtful, and in this topographical draught laid down every village through which

I had passed, or which I had seen at a small distance out of the road, to which I may add every river, an immense number of which I had crossed between Gondar and Geeth, whither I was going. The reader, upon the inspection of this small map, will form some, but a very inadequate idea of the immense labour it cost me: However, the result, when I arrived at Gondar, amply rewarded me for my pains, upon comparing my route by the compass, to what it came to be when ascertained by observation; I found my error of computation upon the whole to be something more than 9 miles in latitude, and very nearly 7 in longitude; an error not perceptible in the journey upon any reduced scale, and very immaterial to all purposes of geography in any large one.

Now Peter Paez, or any man laying claim to a discovery so long and so ardently desired, should surely have done the same; especially as from Gorgora he had little more than half of the journal to keep. But if it were true, that he made the discovery which Kircher attributes to him, still, for want of this necessary attention, he has left the world in the darkness he found it; he travelled like a thief, discovered that secret source, and took a peep at it, then covered it again as if he had been affrightened at the sight of it.

LUDOLF and Vossius are very merry, without mentioning names, with this story of the discovery, which they think Kircher makes for Peter Paez, whom they call the River Finder: they say, it is extremely laughable to think, that the emperor of Abyssinia brought a Jesuit of Europe to be the antiquary of his country, and to instruct him first, that the fountains of the Nile were in his dominions, and in what

part of them. But, with Vossius's leave, this is a species of intemperate ill-founded criticism; neither Kircher, nor Paez, nor whoever was author of that work, ever said they instructed the emperor about the place in his dominions where the Nile arose, as what he says is only that the Agows of Geesh reported that the mountain trembled in dry weather, and had done so that year, when the emperor, who was present, confirmed the Agow's report: this is not saying that Peter Paez told the emperor encamped with his army upon the fountains, that the Nile rose in his dominions, and that this was the source. We be to the works of Scaliger, Bochart, or Vossius, when they shall, in their turn, be submitted to such criticism as this.

A PROTESTANT mission was the next, that I know of at least, which succeeded that of the Portuguese, and consisted only of one traveller, Peter Heyling, of Lubec; although he lived in the country, nay, governed it several years, he never attempted to visit the source of that river; he had dedicated himself to a studious and solitary life, having, among other parts of his reading, a very competent knowledge of Roman, or civil law; he is said to have given a great deal of his time to the compiling an institute of that law in the Abyssinian language for the use of that nation, upon a plan he had brought from Germany; but he did not live to finish it, though that and two other books, written in Geez, still exist in private hands in Abyssinia, at least I have been often confidently told so.

THE next and last attempt I shall take notice of, and one of the most extraordinary that ever was made for the discovery of the Nile, was that of a German nobleman, Peter

Joseph le Roux, comte de Desneval. This gentleman had been in the Danish navy ever since the year 1721, and in 1739 was raised to the rank of rear-admiral in that service. He says, in a publication of his own now lying before me, that the ambassador of Louis XIV. (M. du Roule) and all those sent by the Dutch and English to visit that country, had perished, because they were ignorant of the proper *key* to be employed to enter that country, which he flattered himself he had found in Denmark.

IN 1739 he resigned his Danish commission, and began his first attempt in Egypt, whilst, for the greater facility of travelling in these *mild* and *hospitable* countries, he took his wife along with him. The count and the countess went as far as Cairo, where they wisely began at a festival to dispute upon the etiquette with a Turkish mob, and this bringing the janizaries and guards of police upon them to take them into custody, the *grey mare*, as they say, proved the better *horse*; Madame la comtesse de Desneval exerted herself so much, that she defeated the body of janizaries, wounding several of them, armed only with a very feminine weapon, a pair of scissors, which, with full as much profit, and much more decency, she might have been using, surrounded with her family at home.

HOWEVER well acquainted the count was with the *key* for entering into Abyssinia, he had not apparently got the door. In fact, his first scheme was a most ridiculous one; he resolved to ascend the Nile in a barge armed with small cannon, and all necessary provisions for himself and wife. Some people wiser than himself, whom he met at Cairo, suggested to him, that, supposing government might protect

protect him so far as to allow his barge safely to pass the confines of Egypt and to the first cataract, where the malice of the pilots would certainly have destroyed her, and supposing she was arrived at Ibrim or Deir, the last garrisons depending on Cairo, and that this might have been achieved by money, (for by money any thing may be obtained from the government of Cairo,) yet still, some days journey above the garrisons of Deir and Ibrim, begin the barren and dreadful deserts of Nubia ; and farther south, at the great cataract of Jan Adel, the Nile falls twenty feet down a perpendicular rock ; so here certainly was to be the end of his voyage ; but the count, being ignorant of the manners of those countries, and exceedingly presumptuous of his own powers, flattered himself to obtain such assistance from the garrison of Ibrim and Deir, that he could unscrew his vessel, take her to pieces, and carry her, by force of men, round behind the cataract, where he was to rescrew and launch her again into the Nile.

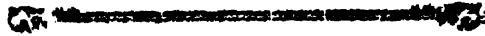
THE Kennoufs, inhabiting near the cataract, have several villages, particularly two, one called Succoot, or the place of tents, where Kalid Ibn el Waalid, after taking Syene in the Khalifat of Omar, encamped his army in his march to Dongola ; the other, in a plain near the river, called Asel Dimmo, or the Field of Blood, where the same Kalid defeated an army of Nubians, who were marching to the relief of Dongola, which was by him immediately after besieged and taken. These two villages are on the Egyptian side of the cataract ; the direct occupation of the inhabitants is gathering senna, where it very much abounds, and they carry it in boats down to Cairo. Above, and on the other side of the cataract, is another large village of the Kennoufs,

noufs, called Takaki. Some of these miserable wretches, were brought to the count, and a treaty made, that all these men of the two villages were to assist him in his re-embarkation, after he had got his barge round the cataract; and among these barbarians he would have lost his life.

THE count, besides his wife, had brought with him his lieutenant, Mr Norden, a Dane, who was to serve him as draughtsman; but neither the count, countess, nor lieutenant understood one word of the languages. There are always (happily for travellers) wise and honest men among the French and Venetian merchants at Cairo, who, seeing the obstinacy of the count, persuaded him that it was more military, and more in the stile of an admiral, to detach Norden, his inferior officer, to reconnoitre Ibrim, Deir, and the cataract of Jan Adel, as also to renew his treaty with the Kennoufs at Succoot and Asel Dimmo.

NORDEN accordingly failed in the common embarkations used upon the Nile; the voyage is in every body's hands. It has certainly a considerable deal of merit, but is full of squabbles and fightings with boat-men and porters, which might as well have been left out, as they lead to no instruction, but serve only to discourage travellers, for they were chiefly owing to ignorance of language. It was with the utmost difficulty, and after many disasters, that Norden arrived at Syenè, and the first cataract; after which greater and greater were encountered before he reached Ibrim, where the Kascheff put him in prison, robbed him of what he had in the boat, and scarcely suffered him to return to Cairo without cutting his throat, which, for a considerable time, he and his soldiers had determined to do.

THIS sample of the difficulties, or rather impossibility of the voyage into Abyssinia by Nubia, discouraged the count; and much reason had he to be thankful that his attempt had not ended among the Kennoufs at Succoot. He therefore changed his plan, and resolved to enter Abyssinia by a voyage round the Cape into the Indian Ocean, through the Straits of Babelmandeb into the Red Sea, and so to Massuah. In this voyage he began to make use of his Spanish commission, and, having taken two English ships, under protection of a neutral fort in the Isle of May, he was met there some days after by commodore Barnet, who made all his ships prizes, and sent the count home passenger in a Portuguese ship to Lisbon. .



CHAP.





## CHAP. XIV.

*Description of the Sources of the Nile—Of Geesh—Accounts of its several Cataracts—Course from its Rise to the Mediterranean.*

I HOPE that what I have now said will be thought sufficient to convince all impartial readers, that these celebrated sources have, as it were, by a fatality, remained to our days as unknown as they were to antiquity, no good or genuine voucher having yet been produced capable of proving that they were before discovered, or seen by the curious eye of any traveller, from earliest ages to this day; and it is with confidence I propose to my reader, that he will consider me as still standing at these fountains, and patiently hear from me the recital of the origin, course, names, and circumstances of this the most famous river in the world, which he will in vain seek from books, or from any other human authority whatever, and which, by the care and attention I have paid to the subject, will, I hope, be found satisfactory here:—

*-Non fabula mendax*

*Ausa loqui de fonte tuo est : ubicunque videris,  
Quæreris ; et nulli contingit gloria genti,  
Ut Nilo sit læta suo, tua flumina prodam,  
Quâ Deus undarum celator, Nile, tuarum  
Te mihi nôsse dedit.*—————

LUCAN.

THE Agows of Damot pay divine honour to the Nile; they worship the river, and thousands of cattle have been offered, and still are offered, to the spirit supposed to reside at its source. They are divided into clans, or tribes; and it is worthy of observation, that it is said there never was a feud, or hereditary animosity between any two of these clans; or, if the seeds of any such were sown, they did not vegetate longer than till the next general convocation of all the tribes, who meet annually at the source of the river, to which they sacrifice, calling it by the name of the *God of Peace*. One of the least considerable of these clans, for power and number, has still the preference among its brethren, from the circumstance that, in its territory, and near the miserable village that gives it name, are situated the much sought-for springs from which the Nile rises.

GEESH, however, though not farther distant from these than 600 yards, is not in sight of the sources of the Nile. The country, upon the same plane with the fountains, terminates in a cliff about 300 yards deep down to the plain of Affoa, which flat country continues in the same subaltern degree of elevation, till it meets the Nile again about seventy miles southward, after it has made the circuit of the provinces of Gojam and Damot. This cliff seems purposely

fashioned into many shelves or stages, each of which is occupied by a cluster of houses seldom above eight or ten in number; some above, some below, some along the side of each other, but chiefly occupying the space, or two-thirds of the middle of the cliff, that is, none of them nearer to the top of the cliff, nor to the plain of Affoa below, than a distance equal to that proportion of the whole. The reason of choosing this situation is the fear of the Galla, who have often invaded that part of Abyssinia, and have even exterminated some clans of Agows entirely.

IN the middle of this cliff, in a direction straight north towards the fountains, is a prodigious cave, whether the work of nature or of art, I cannot determine; in it are many bye-paths, so that it is very difficult for a stranger to extricate himself; it is a natural labyrinth, large enough to contain the inhabitants of the village, and their cattle; there are likewise two or three lesser ones, which I did not see; in this large one, I tired myself part of several days, endeavouring to reach as far northward as possible, but the air, when I had advanced something above one hundred yards, seemed to threaten to extinguish my candle by its dampness; and the people were besides not at all disposed to gratify my curiosity farther, after assuring me that there was nothing at the end more remarkable than I then saw, which I have reason to believe was the case.

THE face of this cliff, which fronts to the south, has a most picturesque appearance from the plain of Affoa below, parts of the houses at every stage appearing, through the thickets of trees and bushes with which the whole face of the cliff is thickly covered; impenetrable fences of the very worst

worst kind of thorn, hide the mouths of the caverns above mentioned, even from sight; there is no other communication with the houses either from above or below, but by narrow-winding sheep-paths, which through these thorns are very difficult to be discerned, for all are allowed to be overgrown with the utmost wildness, as a part of their defence; lofty and large trees (most of them of the thorny kind) tower high up above the edge of the cliff, and seem to be a fence against people falling down into the plain; these are all at their proper season covered with flowers of different sorts and colours, so are the bushes below on the face of the cliff: every thorn in Abyssinia indeed bears a beautiful flower; a small atonement for the evils they occasion.

FROM the edge of the cliff of Geesh above where the village is situated, the ground slopes with a very easy descent due north, and lands you at the edge of a triangular marsh above eighty six-yards broad, in the line of the fountains, and two hundred and eighty-six yards two feet from the edge of the cliff above the house of the priest of the river, where I resided: this triangle, supposing it a right one, will measure one hundred and ninety-six yards in its length, or in the perpendicular; I mean it did so on the 6th of November 1770; doubtless, like other marshes, in the middle of the dry season, and of the rains, it will vary its dimensions. I suppose that this perpendicular represents the north of the marsh, and immediately from the brink of it the ground rises in a rather steep bank, and forms a round hill not a hundred yards high, upon the top of which is placed the church of St Michael Geesh; I did not measure this distance, but am sure it is very little less than five hundred yards from the church to the middle fountain. On the east the

ground descends likewise with a very easy tho' perceptible slope from the large village of Sacala, which gives its name to that territory; it is distant six miles from the source, but, to sight, seems scarcely to be two.

I SAHLL suppose the sharp point of the triangle composed of the hypotenuse and the perpendicular, to point like the needle of a compass to Sacala, and the line of the hypotenuse to represent the south side of the marsh near the village Geesh. The base, or line, uniting the west end of the hypotenuse, and forming the right angle with the other side, I suppose to be the edge of the marsh formed by the bottom of the mountain of Geesh, and from this west side of it rises this high and beautiful mountain, quite detached from others, like a pyramid, which it resembles in its elegant and regular form. It is about 4870 feet high measured in the slope; for near one half way the ascent is very easy and gradual. The base being of a remarkable breadth, it then becomes exceedingly steep, but all the way covered with good earth, producing fine grass and clover, interspersed with wild flowers.

UPON the rock in the middle of this plain, the Agows used to pile up the bones of the beasts killed in sacrifice, mixing them with billets of wood, after which they set them on fire. This is now discontinued, or rather transferred to another place near the church, as they are at present indulged in the full enjoyment of their idolatrous rites, both under Fasil and Michael.

IN the middle of this marsh (that is about forty yards from each side of it) and something less from the bottom  
of

of the mountain of Geesh, arises a hillock of a circular form, about three feet from the surface of the marsh itself, though apparently founded much deeper in it. The diameter of this is something short of twelve feet, it is surrounded by a shallow trench, which collects the water and voids it eastward; it is firmly built with sod or earthen turf, brought from the sides, and constantly kept in repair, and this is the altar upon which all their religious ceremonies are performed. In the middle of this altar is a hole, obviously made, or at least enlarged by the hand of man. It is kept clear of grass, or other aquatic plants, and the water in it is perfectly pure and limpid, but has no ebullition or motion of any kind discernible upon its surface. This mouth, or opening of the source, is some parts of an inch less than three feet diameter, and the water stood at that time the 5th of November, about two inches from the lip or brim, nor did it either increase or diminish during all the time of my stay at Geesh though we made plentiful use of it.

UPON putting down the shaft of my lance at six feet four inches, I found a very feeble resistance, as if from weak rushes or grass, and about six inches deeper I found my lance had entered into soft earth, but met with no stones or gravel; this was confirmed by another experiment, made on the 9th with a heavy plummet and line besmeared with soap, the bottom of which brought up at the above depth only black earth, such as the marsh itself and its sides are composed of.

TEN feet distant from the first of these springs, a little to the west of south, is the second fountain, about eleven inches in diameter, but this is eight feet, three inches deep.  
And

And about twenty feet distant from the first, to the S. S. W. is the third source, its mouth being something more than two feet large, and it is five feet eight inches deep. Both these last fountains stand in the middle of small altars, made, like the former, of firm sod, but neither of them above three feet diameter, and having a foot of less elevation than the first. The altar in this third source seemed almost dissolved by the water, which in both stood nearly up to the brim; at the foot of each appeared a clear and brisk running rill; these uniting joined the water in the trench of the first altar, and then proceeded directly out, I suppose, at the point of the triangle, pointing eastward, in a quantity that would have filled a pipe of about two inches diameter.

THE water from these fountains is very light and good, and perfectly tasteless; it was at this time most intensely cold, though exposed to the mid-day sun without shelter, there being no trees nor bushes nearer it than the cliff of Geesh on its south side, and the trees that surround Saint Michael Geesh on the north, which, according to the custom of Abyssinia, is, like other churches, planted in the midst of a grove.

ON Monday the 5th of November, the day after my arrival at Geesh, the weather perfectly clear, cloudless, and nearly calm, in all respects well adapted to observation, being extremely anxious to ascertain, beyond the power of controversy, the precise spot on the globe that this fountain had so long occupied unknown, I pitched my tent on the north edge of the cliff, immediately above the priest's house, having verified the instrument with all the care pos-

sible, both at the zenith and horizon. With a brass quadrant of three feet radius, by one meridian altitude of the sun's upper limb, all necessary equations and deductions considered, I determined the latitude of the place of observation to be  $10^{\circ} 59' 11''$ ; and by another observation of the same kind made on the 6th,  $10^{\circ} 59' 8''$ ; after which, by a medium of thirty-three observations of stars, the largest and nearest, the first vertical, I found the latitude to be  $10^{\circ} 59' 10''$ ; a mean of which being  $10^{\circ} 59' 9\frac{1}{2}''$ , say  $10^{\circ} 59' 10''$ ; and if we should be so unnecessarily scrupulous as to add  $15''$  for the measured distance the place of the tent was south of the altar, then we shall have  $10^{\circ} 59' 25''$  in round numbers, for the exact latitude of the principal fountain of the Nile, though the Jesuits have supposed it,  $12^{\circ}$  N. by a random guess; but this being nearly the latitude of Gondar, the capital from which they set out, shews plainly they knew not the precise latitude of either of these places.

On the 7th of November I was fortunate enough to be in time for the observation of an immersion of the first satellite of Jupiter, the last visible here before that planet's conjunction with the sun. My situation was very unfavourable, my view of the heavens being every way interrupted by a thick grove of bamboo canes, with high and shady trees growing upon the head of the precipice. Jupiter was low, and the prodigious mass of that beautiful mountain of Geeth, bade fair to hide him before our business was done; I was therefore obliged to remove my telescope up to the edge of the cliff, after which, the weather being perfectly favourable, I had a fair and distinct view of the planet as I could desire, and from that observation I did conclude unalterably the longitude of the chief fountain.



tain of the Nile to be  $36^{\circ} 55' 30''$  east of the meridian of Greenwich.

THE night of the 4th, that very night of my arrival, melancholy reflections upon my present state, the doubtfulness of my return in safety, were I permitted to make the attempt, and the fears that even this would be refused, according to the rule observed in Abyssinia with all travellers who have once entered the kingdom; the consciousness of the pain that I was then occasioning to many worthy individuals, expecting daily that information concerning my situation which it was not in my power to give them; some other thoughts, perhaps, still nearer the heart than those, crowded upon my mind, and forbade all approach of sleep.

I WAS, at that very moment, in possession of what had, for many years, been the principal object of my ambition and wishes: indifference, which from the usual infirmity of human nature follows, at least for a time, complete enjoyment, had taken place of it. The marsh, and the fountains, upon comparison with the rise of many of our rivers, became now a trifling object in my sight. I remembered that magnificent scene in my own native country, where the Tweed, Clyde, and Annan rise in one hill; three rivers, as I now thought, not inferior to the Nile in beauty, preferable to it in the cultivation of those countries through which they flow; superior, vastly superior to it in the virtues and qualities of the inhabitants, and in the beauty of its flocks; crowding its pastures in peace, without fear of violence from man or beast. I had seen the rise of the Rhine and Rhone, and the more magnificent sources of the Soane; I began, in  
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my sorrow, to treat the inquiry about the source of the Nile as a violent effort of a distempered fancy :—

What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,  
That he should weep for her ?—

Grief or despondency now rolling upon me like a torrent ; relaxed, not refreshed, by unquiet and imperfect sleep, I started from my bed in the utmost agony ; I went to the door of my tent ; every thing was still ; the Nile, at whose head I stood, was not capable either to promote or to interrupt my slumbers, but the coolness and serenity of the night braced my nerves, and chased away those phantoms that, while in bed, had oppressed and tormented me.

It was true, that numerous dangers, hardships, and sorrows had beset me through this half of my excursion ; but it was still as true, that another Guide, more powerful than my own courage, health, or understanding, if any of these can be called man's own, had uniformly protected me in all that tedious half ; I found my confidence not abated, that still the same Guide was able to conduct me to my now wished-for home : I immediately resumed my former fortitude, considered the Nile indeed as no more than rising from springs, as all other rivers do, but widely different in this, that it was the palm for three thousand years held out to all the nations in the world as a *detur dignissimo*, which, in my cool hours, I had thought was worth the attempting at the risk of my life, which I had long either resolved to lose, or lay this discovery, a trophy in which I could have no competitor, for the honour of my country, at the feet of my sovereign, whose servant I was.

I HAD procured from the English ships, while at Jidda, some quick-silver, perfectly pure, and heavier than the common sort; warming therefore the tube gently at the fire, I filled it with this quick-silver, and, to my great surprise, found that it stood at the height of 22 English inches: suspecting that some air might have insinuated itself into the tube, I laid it by in a warm part of the tent, covered till morning, and returning to bed, slept there profoundly till six, when, satisfied the whole was in perfect order, I found it to stand at 22 English inches; neither did it vary sensibly from that height any of the following days I staid at Geesh; and thence I inferred, that, at the sources of the Nile, I was then more than two miles above the level of the sea; a prodigious height, to enjoy a sky perpetually clear, as also a hot sun never over-cast for a moment with clouds from rising to setting.

ON the 6th of November, at a quarter past five in the morning, Fahrenheit's thermometer stood at 44°, at noon 96°, and at sun-set 46°. It was, as to sense, cold at night, and still more so an hour before sun-rise.

THE Nile, keeping nearly in the middle of the marsh, runs east for thirty yards, with a very little increase of stream, but perfectly visible, till met by the grassy brink of the land declining from Sacala. This turns it round gradually to the N. E. and then due north; and, in the two miles it flows in that direction, the river receives many small contributions from springs that rise in the banks on each side of it: there are two, particularly one on the hill at the back of St Michael Geesh, the other a little lower than it on the other side, on the ground declining from Sacala. These last-mentioned

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ed springs are more than double its quantity; and being arrived under the hill whereon stands the church of Saint Michael Sacala, about two miles from its source, it there becomes a stream that would turn a common mill, shallow, clear, and running over a rocky bottom about three yards wide: this must be understood to be variable according to the season; and the present observations are applicable to the 5th of November, when the rains had ceased for several weeks. There is the ford which we passed going to Geesh, and we crossed it the day of our arrival, in the time of my conversation with Woldo about the fash.

Nothing can be more beautiful than this spot; the small rising hills about us were all thick-covered with verdure, especially with clover, the largest and finest I ever saw; the tops of the heights crowned with trees of a prodigious size; the stream, at the banks of which we were sitting, was limpid and pure as the finest crystal; the ford, covered thick with a bushy kind of tree that seemed to affect to grow to no height, but thick with foliage and young branches, rather to court the surface of the water, whilst it bore, in prodigious quantities, a beautiful yellow flower, not unlike a single wild rose of that colour, but without thorns; and, indeed, upon examination, we found that it was not a species of the rose, but of hypericum.

From the source to this beautiful ford, below the church of St Michael Geesh, I enjoyed my second victory over this coy river, after the first obtained at the fountains themselves. What might still be said of the world in general no longer applied to me:—

*-Nec contigit ulli*

*Hoc vidisse caput;*

And again,

*Nec licuit populis parvum te, Nile, videre.*

HERE, at the ford, after having stepped over it fifty times, I observed it no larger than a common mill stream. The Nile, from this ford, turns to the westward, and, after running over loose stones occasionally, in that direction, about four miles farther, the angle of inclination increasing greatly, broken water, and a fall commences of about six feet, and thus it gets rid of the mountainous place of its nativity, and issues into the plain of Goutto, where is its first cataract; for, as I have said before, I don't account the broken water, or little falls, cataracts, which are not at all visible in the height of the rains.

ARRIVED in the plain of Goutto, the river seems to have lost all its violence, and scarcely is seen to flow, but, at the same time, it there makes so many sharp, unnatural windings, that it differs from any other river I ever saw, making above twenty sharp angular peninsulas in the course of five miles, through a bare, marshy plain of clay, quite destitute of trees, and exceedingly inconvenient and unpleasant to travel. After passing this plain, it turns due north, receives the tribute of many small streams, the Gometti, the Goo-gueri, and the Kebezza, which descend from the mountains of Aformasha; and, united, fall into the Nile about twenty miles below its source; it begins here to run rapidly, and again receives a number of beautiful rivulets, which have their rise in the heights of Litchambara, the semi-circular range of mountains that pass behind, and seem to inclose Aformasha:

Aformasha : These are the Caccino, the Carnachiuli, the Googueri, the Iworra, the Jeddeli, and the Minch, all which, running into the Davola, join the Nile something less than a mile west of the church of Abbo.

It is now become a considerable stream ; its banks high and broken, covered with old timber trees for the space of about three miles ; it inclines to the north-east, and winds exceedingly, and is then joined by the small river Diwa from the east. It then makes a semi-circle, and receives Dec-ohha, turns sharply to the east, and falls down its second cataract at Kerr. About three miles below this cataract, the large, pleasant, and limpid Jemma pays its tribute to the Nile. Though its course is now mostly north, through Maitsha on the east, and Aroossi and Sankraber on the west, it still is inclining toward the lake Tzana, and, after receiving the rivers Boha and Amlac Ohha, small streams from the west, and the Affar, Aroossi, and Kelti, large rivers from the east, it crosses the south end of the lake Tzana for about seven leagues, preserving the colour of its stream distinct from that of the lake, till it issues out at the west side of it in the territory of Dara, where there is a ford, though very deep and dangerous, immediately where it first resumes the appearance of a river.

THE deep stream is here exceedingly rapid ; the banks in the course of a few miles become very high, and are covered with a verdure, abundant and varied beyond all description : passing afterwards below Dara, it bounds that narrow stripe of flat country which is called Foggora, confined between the lake and the mountains of Begemder, till it arrives at its third cataract of Alata, a small village of Maho-

metans, on the east side of the river, and there exhibits a scene that requires more fancy, and the description of a more poetical pen than mine, although the impression the sight of it made upon me will certainly never be removed but with life.

THE course of the river is now S. E. ; in that direction it washes the western part of Begemder and Amhara on the right; the river then incloses the province of Gojam, so that, in the circle that it makes in returning towards its source, that province remains always on the right.

FROM both sides, the Nile receives a number of tributary streams, the Muga, Gammala, Abea, Afwari, and Mashillo, from the mountains of Gojam ; and the Bashilo, Boha, and Geeshem from those of Begemder and Amhara ; it then passes below Walaka. The river now has a course near the southward, passes Upper and Lower Shoa. From these countries, on the east of the Nile, come the great rivers Samba, Jemma, Roma, with some others, and the Tems, Gult, and Tzul from the high country of the Agows, and Amid Amid to the northward. From Shoa the Nile winds to the S. W. to the W. N. W. nearly inclosing all the south of Gojam. Immediately adjoining to it, turning still more northerly, is the province of Bizamo, bordering on the river Yabous, which, coming from the southward, and terminating this province, falls into the Nile.

THE Nile, now turned almost due north, approaches its source so as to be distant from it only about 62 miles ; it is here very deep and rapid, and is only fordable at certain seasons of the year. The Galla, however, when they invade Abyssinia, cross it at all times without difficulty, either by swimming, or on goats skins blown up like bladders :

other means of passing are in small rafts, placed upon two skins filled with wind; or, twisting their hands round the horse's tail, they are drawn over by them; this last is the way that the women, who follow the armies of Abyssinia, cross unfordable rivers, a case that always occurs in late campaigns. Crocodiles abound exceedingly in this part of the Nile; but the people, who live on the banks of the river, have or pretend to have charms which defend them from the most voracious of these animals.

ADJOINING to the Gongas, and bounding them on the north, arises a vast chain of very high mountains; the south side of this is inhabited by tribes of Gongas and others, but on the north-east side, nearest Abyssinia, is a nation of perfect blacks, called Guba. The Nile seems to have forced its way through a gap in this prodigious barrier, and falls down a cataract of about 280 feet. This is immediately followed by two others in the same ridge of mountains, both very considerable, if not compared with the first. This high ridge runs west far into the continent of Africa, where it is called Dyre and Tegla; the east end (that is east of the Nile) joins the mountainous country of Kuara, and is there called the Mountains of Fazuclo. These mountains, as far as I could learn, are all very fully inhabited throughout by many powerful clans, or nations, mostly Pagans. It is, however, a country the least known of any in Africa, but a very large quantity of gold is brought from thence, as well as many slaves; the gold is washed down by the torrents in the time of the tropical rains, and, upon these ceasing, they search after that metal found in small pellets entangled among roots, branches, tufts of grass, hollows,



hollows, or in any thing that can imprison and detain it. This is the fine gold of Sennaar, called Tibbar.

THE Nile now runs close by Sennaar, in a direction nearly north and south; it then turns sharply toward the east, is brim-full and vastly pleasant in the fair season, being indeed the only ornament of this bare and flat, though cultivated country. From Sennaar it passes many large towns inhabited by Arabs, all of them white people. The Nile then passes Gerri, and runs N. E. to join the Tacazzè, passing in its way a large and populous town called Chendi, probably the ancient metropolis of *Gandace* \*.

IF we are not to reject entirely the authority of ancient history, the island of Meroë, so famous in the first ages, must be found somewhere between the source of the Nile and this point, where the two rivers unite; for of the Nile we are certain, and it seems very clear that the Atbara is the Astaboras of the ancients. Pliny † says, it is the stream which incloses the left side of Meroë as the Nile does the right; and we must consider him to be looking southward from Alexandria, when he uses the otherwise equivocal terms of right and left, and, after this junction of these two rivers, the Nile receives or unites itself with no other till it falls into the sea at Alexandria.

Much inquiry has been made about this island, once a most distinguished spot on our globe, the cradle of science and

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\* Called in the Ethiopic annals *Hendaqué*; wrote originally, I suppose, with an *X* or *Ch*. ]

† Lib. v. cap. 9. Nat. Hist.

and philosophy, which spread itself from this to enlighten other nations, we are now full of uncertainty, searching in a desert for the place of its existence; such is the miserable instability of all human excellence. Nothing but confusion has followed this inquiry, because they who were engaged in it rather substituted vain systematical prejudices of their own, than set themselves to consider those lights which were immediately before them.

THE Jesuits, and a French writer, who is a constant champion of their errors, have fixed the peninsula of Gojam to be the Meroë of the ancients. M. le Grande (the compiler alluded to) having in vain endeavoured to answer the objections against Gojam being Meroë, at last declares, in a kind of literary passion, that the ancients have spoken so differently about Meroë, that Gojam is as likely to be the place as any other.

I HAVE a proper esteem for the merit of M. le Grande, where he forms his conjectures from his own opinion, and I have also a due deference to that learned Order the Jesuits; it is to their labours, that learning in general, and geography in particular, has been more indebted than to those of any other set of men whatever. Yet still I can never believe, either that Gojam is Meroë, or that there is any difficulty in finding its true situation, or that the ancients have written confusedly about it. On the contrary, I find it described by its latitude, its distance from places known, the produce of its soil, colour of its inhabitants, and several other circumstances which peculiarly belong to it, with greater accuracy and precision than many other disputed situations.

I SHALL begin by giving my reasons why Gojam is not Meroë: and, first, Diodorus \* tells us, this island had its name from a sister of Cambyfes, king of Persia, who died there in the expedition that prince had undertaken against Ethiopia. Now, Cambyfes's army perished in the desert immediately to the southward, after he had passed Meroë, consequently he never was in Gojam, nor within 200 miles of it; his mother, therefore, could not have died there, nor would his army have perished with hunger if he had arrived in Gojam, or near it, for he would then have been in one of the most plentiful countries in the world.

THE next reason to prove that Gojam is not Meroë, is, that that island was inclosed between the Astaboras and the Nile, but Gojam is furrounded entirely by the Nile; there is no other river than it that can, or ever did, pass for the Astaboras, whose situation was distant, and which, retaining its ancient name, cannot be mistaken, for it is at this day called Atbara. Again, as the ancients knew Meroë, if Gojam had been Meroë, they must have known the fountains of the Nile; and this we are sure they did not.

ON the other hand, Pliny says, Meroë, the most considerable of all the islands of the Nile, is called Astaboras, from the name of its left channel—" *Circa clarissimam earum Meroën, "Astabores lævo alveo dictus; †*" which cannot describe any other place than the confluence of those two rivers, the Nile and Atbara. The same author says farther, that the sun is vertical twice a-year, once when proceeding northward he enters

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\* Diod. Sicul. Bibliothec. lib. i. p. 20.

† Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. v. cap. 9.

enters into the 18th degree, Taurus, and after returning southward into the 14th degree of the Lion.—Lucan says the same:—

—*Latè tibi gurgite rupto*  
*Ambitur nigris Meroë fecunda colonis,*  
*Lætæ conis bebeni; quæ quamvis arbore multâ*  
*Frondeat, æstatem nullâ sibi mitigat umbrâ:*  
*Linca tam rectum mundi ferit illa Leonem.*

Now Gojam, being in lat. 10°, could never answer this description.

BUT there are in these lines two circumstances which are peculiar to the peninsula of Atbara, or Meroë, and described as such by the poet. The first is, the inhabitants of Meroë were black, such were the Gymnosophists, the first philosophers and inhabitants of this island, and such they have ever been down to the Saracen conquest. On the other hand, nobody will pretend to say that the people of Gojam are black; they are long-haired, and of as fair a complexion as other Abyssinians; nor was it ever supposed that they had philosophers or science among them before the Jesuits arrived in the country.

THE next circumstance, peculiar to Meroë, is, that the ebony-tree grew there, which is spread all over the peninsula of Atbara, and out of it this tree is not found, (as far as I know) unless a few trees in the province of Kuara, in the low and northermost part of it; a country, for its intolerable heat, not inferior to that of Atbara, and contiguous to it; but in

Gojam, a country deluged with six months rain, this tree would not grow; though so much farther south it is near two English miles higher than Atbara, and is therefore too cold. Such are my reasons for believing that Gojam cannot be Meroë. In my return through the desert I shall confirm this, by proving that Atbara is Meroë, and that we are to look for it about lat.  $16^{\circ} 29'$ , near the end of the tropical rains.

THE Nile, now united with the Aftaboras, takes its course straight north for more than two degrees of the meridian; it then makes a very unexpected turn W. by S. considerably more than that space in longitude, winding very little till it arrives at Korti, the first town in the Barabra, or kingdom of Dongola. The river by this time, with three sides, inclosed the great deserts of Bahiouda the road through this from Dereira to Korti (before it was cut off by the Arabs, as it now continues to be) made the fourth side of the square which bound this desert; by this route it was that Poncet and the unfortunate M. du Roule went to Abyssinia.

FROM Korti the Nile runs almost S. W. where it passes Dongola, a country of the Shepherds, called also Beja, the capital of Barabra, and comes to Moscho, a considerable town, and welcome place of refreshment to the weary traveller, when the caravans were suffered to pass from Egypt into Ethiopia, who, after traversing the dreary desert of Selima for near 500 miles, found himself at Moscho, in repose, in the enjoyment of plenty of fresh water, long ago become to him an indulgence more delicious than ever he had before conceived. From Moscho the Nile turns gradually to the N. E. and in lat.  $22^{\circ} 15'$  it meets with a chain of mountains,

tains, and throws itself over them down a cataract called Jan Adel, which is its seventh cataract; and, continuing still N. E. it passes Ibrim and Deir, two small garrisons belonging to Egypt. The fall of the Nile in the country of Kennoufs, which forms the 8th cataract, and its course through Egypt, are already described in my voyage up the river.



CHAP.

## CHAP. XVI.

*Various Names of this River—Ancient Opinion concerning the Cause of its Inundation—Real Manner by which it is effected—Remarkable Disposition of the Peninsula of Africa.*

**I**T is not to be wondered, that, in the long course the Nile makes from its source to the sea, it should have acquired a different name in every territory, where a different language was spoken; but there is one thing remarkable, that though the name in sound and in letters is really different, yet the signification is the same, and has an obvious reference to the dog-star.

AMONG the Agow, a barbarous and idolatrous nation, it is called Gzeir, Geefa \*, Seir; the first of these names signifying *God*; it is also called Abba, or Ab, *Father*; and by many other terms which I cannot write in the language of that nation, whilst, with a fervent and unfeigned devotion, under

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\* From a nation of Shangalla of that name, through which it runs, after having passed its source, and taken its course into Nubia.

under these, or such-like appellations, they pray to the Nile, or spirit residing in that river. The next name it receives is when descended into Gojam, where it is called Abay. Foreigners, of all denominations, not acquainted with the language of the country, have, from hearing it was filed Ab, *Father*, by the Agows, or Abai, imagined its name Abawi, a case of that noun, which, in their ignorance, they have made to signify, the Father.

LUDOLF, the only one in the age he lived that had any real knowledge of either the Geez or Amharic, was the first to perceive this: he found in neither of these languages Abawi could be a nominative, and consequently could not be applied to any thing; and next he as truly found it could not be of the singular number, and, if so, could not signify one river. He stopped, however, as it were, in the very brink of discovery, for he knew there was no writing or letters in Amharic, which were therefore necessarily borrowed from the old and written language Geez, so that all that could be done was, first, attentively to hear the pronunciation of the word in Amharic, and then to write it in Geez characters as nearly conformable to the sound as possible. Now, the name of the river in Amharic is Abay, pronouncing the y open, or like two (i), and the sense of that word so wrote in Geez, as well as Amharic, is, "the river" "that suddenly swells, or overflows, periodically with rain;" than which a more apposite name could never have been invented.

By the Gongas, on the south of the mountains Dyre and Tegla, who are indigenæ, the river is called Dabli, and, on the north of these mountains, where the great cataracts are by the



the Guba, Nuba, and Shangalla, it is stiled Kowafs, both which names signify a *watching dog*, the latrator anubis, or, the *dog-star*. In the plain country, between Fazuclo and Sennaar, it is called Nil, which signifies *blue*; and the Arabs interpret it by the word Azergue, which it keeps as far as Halfaia, or near it, where it joins the White River.

THE next name by which the Nile went was Siris: Pliny tells us it was called Siris both before and after it came into Beja. "*Nec ante Nilus; quam se totum aquis concordibus rursus junxit. Sic quoque etiamnum Siris, ut ante nominatus per aliquot millia, et in totum Homero Egyptus, aliisque Triton\*.*" This name the Greeks thought was given to it, because of its black colour during the inundation, which mistake presently produced confusion; and we find, according to this idea, the compiler of the Old Testament, (I should suppose Esdras, after the captivity) has translated Siris, *the black river*, by the Hebrew, Shihor; but nobody ever saw the Nile black when it overflowed; and it would be a very strong figure to call it so in Egypt, where it is always white during the whole of the inundation. Had Esdras, or whoever it was that followed the Greek interpretation of Siris, viz. *black*, inquired in Beja what was the origin of this name, they would have there learned it imported the River of the Dog-star, on whose vertical appearance this Nile, or Siris, overflows; and this idolatrous worship, paid to the Nile, was probably part of the reason of the question the prophet Jeremiah asks †, "And what hast thou to do in Egypt, to drink the water of Seir? or the water profaned by idolatrous rites?"

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\* Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. v. cap. 9.

† Jerem. chap. ii. ver. xviii.

As for the first, it is only the translation of the word Bahar, applied to the Nile. The inhabitants of the Barabra, to this day, call it Bahar el Nil, or, *the Sea of the Nile*, in contradistinction to the Red Sea, which they know by no other name but Bahar el Melech, the *Salt Sea*. The junction of the three great rivers; the Nile, flowing on the west of Meroë; the Tacazzé, which washes the east side, and joins the Nile at Maggiran, in lat. 17°; and the Mareb, which falls into this last, something above this junction—gives the name of Triton to the Nile.

MORE doubt has been raised as to the third name, *Ægyptus*, which it obtains in Homer, and which, I apprehend, was a very ancient name given it even in Ethiopia. The generality, nay, all interpreters, I may say, imagine, as in that of Siris, that this name was given it in relation to its colour, viz. *black*; but with this I cannot agree; Egypt, in the Ethiopic, is called *y Gipt*, Agar; and, an inhabitant of the country, *Gypt*, for precisely so it is pronounced, which means the country of ditches, or canals, drawn from the Nile on both sides at right angles with the river; nothing, surely is more obvious than to write *y Gipt*, so pronouncing Egypt, and, with its termination, *us*, or *os*, *Ægyptus*. The Nile is also called, *Kronides*, Jupiter; as also several other names; but these are rather the epithets of poets, relative and transitory, not the permanent appellation of the river.

I would pass over another name, that of Geon, which some of the fathers of the church have fondly given it, pretending it was one of the rivers that came from the terrestrial paradise, and encompassed the whole land of Cush, whilst, for this purpose, they bring it two thousand miles by

a series of miracles, as it were, under the earth and under the sea : To do what ? to surround the whole land of Cush. And does it surround it, or does it surround any land whatever ? This, and some similar wonders told by St Augustine, have been eagerly caught at, and quoted by unbelieving sceptics ; meaning to insinuate, that no better, in other respects, was the authority of these fathers when they explain and defend the truths of Christianity. For my own part, though perfectly a friend to free and temperate inquiry, these injudicious arguments which I need not quote, have little weight with me. St Augustine, when explaining those truths, was undoubtedly under the direction of that spirit which could not lie, and was promised to the priesthood while occupied in their master's commission the propagation of Christian knowledge ; but when, from vanity and human frailty, he attempted to establish things he had nothing to do with, speaking no longer by commandment, he reasoned like a mere man, misled by vanity and too great confidence in his own understanding.

We come now to investigate the reason of the inundation of the Nile, which, being once explained, I cannot help thinking that all further inquiries concerning this subject are superfluous.

It is an observation that holds good through all the works of Providence, That although God, in the beginning, gave an instance of his almighty power, by creating the world with one single *fiat*, yet, in the laws he has laid down for the maintaining order and regularity in the details of his creation, he has invariably produced all these effects by the least degree of power possible, and by those means that seem most obvious to human conception. But it seemed, however, not according

according to the tenor of his ways and wisdom, to create a country like Egypt, without springs, or even dews, and subject it to a nearly vertical sun, that he might save it by so extraordinary an intervention as was the annual inundation, and make it the most fertile spot of the universe.

THIS violent effort seemed to be too great, above all proportion, for the end for which it was intended, and the cause was therefore thought to merit the application of the sublimest philosophy; and accordingly, as Diodorus Siculus \* tells us, it became the study of the most learned men of the first ages, the principal of whom, with their opinions, he quotes, and at the same time alleges the reason why they were not universally received. The first is Thales of Miletum, one of the seven sages, who assigns for the cause the Etesian winds, which blowing, all the hot season, from the Mediterranean, in contrary direction to the stream of the river, force the Nile to accumulate, by obstructing its flowing to the sea, occasion it to rise above its banks, and consequently to overflow the country.

BUT to this it was answered, That, were this the cause, all rivers running in a northern direction, to the sea, would be subject to the same accident; and this it was known they were not. And we may further add, that were this really the cause, the inundation of the Nile would be very irregular; for the winds at this season often blow from the south-west for two or three days together, and then the inundation would be interrupted. To this it must be added, that a very considerable part of Egypt, and that the most

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\* Diod. Sic. lib. i.

fertile, the Delta, is under the dominion of variable winds, which last long, from one point, at no time.

I SHALL trespass upon my reader's patience, on this head, by no more than one additional observation. If the Etesian winds, by opposing the stream, occasioned the inundation, they could effect this no longer than they continued to blow. Now, it was an observation we made when on the Nile, and it was almost without exception, that as often as the Etesian winds blew throughout the day, the night was either calm, or the wind blew gently from the south or east, so that it is morally impossible the river could have overflowed at all, without a much more powerful and constant agent than the Etesian winds:—

————— *Zephyros quoque vana vetustas*  
*His descriptis aquis,*—————

LUCAN..

Vain, indeed! A philosopher of the present age would be thought mad who should rely on a system so contrary to experiment and observation; though Thales, the propagator of this now mentioned, was so highly esteemed for his knowledge.

THE next opinion quoted is that of Anaxagoras, who attributes the inundation of the Nile to snow melting in Ethiopia; and this Diodorus contradicts, for a very substantial reason, that there is no snow in Ethiopia to melt. But supposing all the mountainous part of Ethiopia north of the Line, that is all Abyssinia, were covered with snow, then the inundation must happen in other months, as it must begin in January, for the sun being then within few de-

grees of being vertical, it must have been the very height of flood when the sun passed over that country in April; whereas its increase is not discerned till about June, when the sun has left the zenith of all Abyssinia, having then passed over Nubia, and is standing vertical to Syene, or as far to the northward as it can proceed.

It is not my meaning to maintain that there never was snow in Abyssinia, as climates have wonderfully changed. In Cæsar's time, the greatest rivers in the Gaul almost every year were frozen over for months, so that armed nations, with their families, cattle, and incumbrances, passed regularly over them upon the ice without fear; an event that happens not now once in a century. In Prussia\* also were found white bears, an animal now confined to the severest snowy regions of the north; and, what comes still nearer to the present subject, in the inscription found in Abyssinia by Cosmas Indoplaustes, Ptolomæus Evergetes, speaking there, in the first person, of his own conquests in Ethiopia, says, that he had passed the river Siris, and had entered the kingdom of Samen, a country intolerable on account of cold and deep snow..

THIS account I think almost incredible. Ptolemy parted from Egypt, his fleet coasting along the Red Sea, opposite to his army, and carrying provisions for it; we know, moreover, the time his ships sailed, the beginning of June, when the Nile was overflowed, and consequently of great utility to his army on the first part of his expedition, while he was in Egypt and part of Nubia. Now supposing him to pass  
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\* Pausanius Arcad. chap. xvii.

the desert as quickly as possible, and come to Axum, it must have been then Summer, or near it; and as it was necessary his fleet should return by the monsoon in October, so it must have then rained continually, and the sun been perpendicular to the country when he found the deep snows in Samen, which is not very probable. The river Tacazzé, moreover, which Ptolemy crossed, was really not passable at that time, and no Abyssinian army did ever attempt it during a flood, though, without scruple at all seasons they cross the Nile when most deep and rapid.

I REMEMBER that when I first ascended Lamalmon, the highest mountain of that ridge, running the whole length of the province of Samen, it was in the depth of winter; the thermometer stood at 32°, wind N. W. clear and cold, but attended with only hoar frost, though at that height, and at that season; the grass scarcely was discoloured, and only felt crisp below my feet, with this small degree of freezing; but this vanished into dew after a quarter of an hour's sun, nor did I ever see any sign of congelation upon the water, however shaded and stagnant, upon the top of that, or any other hill. I have seen hail indeed lie for three hours in the forenoon upon the mountains of Amid Amid.

THE opinion of Democritus was, that the overflowing of the Nile was owing to the sun's attraction of snowy vapour from the frozen mountains of the north, which being carried by the wind southward, and thawed by warmer climates, fell down upon Ethiopia in deluges of rain: and the same is advanced by Agatharcides of Cnidus in his Periplus of the Red Sea. This opinion of Democritus, Diodorus attempts to refute, but we shall not join him in his refutation,

because we are now perfectly certain, from observation, that Democritus and Agatharcides both of them had fallen upon the true causes of the inundation.

I SHALL now mention a treatise of a modern philosopher, wrote expressly upon this subject, I mean a discourse on the causes of the inundation of the Nile, by M. de la Chambre, printed at Paris in quarto, 1665, where, in a long dedication, he modestly assures the king, he is persuaded that his majesty will consider, as one of the glories of his reign, the discovery of the true cause of the Nile's inundation, which he had then made, after it had baffled the inquiry of all philosophers for the space of 2000 years; and, indeed, the cause and the discovery would have been both very remarkable, had they been attended with the least degree of possibility. M. de la Chambre says, that the nitre with which the ground in Egypt is impregnated, ferments like a kind of paste, occasioning the Nile to ferment likewise, and thus increases the mass of water so much, that it spreads over the whole land of Egypt.

FAR be it from me to bear hard upon those attempts with which the ancients endeavoured to solve those phenomena, when, for want of a sufficient progress in experimental philosophy and observation, they were generally destitute of the proper means; but there is no excuse for a man's either believing or writing, that earth, impregnated with so small a quantity of any mixture as not to be discernible to the eye, smell, or taste, could periodically swell the waters of a river, then almost dry, to such an immensity, as to cover the whole plains of Egypt, and discharge millions of tons every day into the sea, at the same time  
that



that it contributed to the health of the people and the fertility of the land. It puts me in mind of an assertion of M. de Maillet, almost as absurd as de la Chambre's treatise, that the Nile, which in Egypt is the only fountain of pleasure, of health, and plenty, has a mixture of one tenth of mud during the time of the inundation: pleasant and wholesome stream, truly, to which Fleetditch would be Hippocrene.

BUT whatever were the conjectures of the dreamers of antiquity, modern travellers and philosophers, describing without system or prejudice what their eyes saw have found that the inundation of Egypt has been effected by natural means, perfectly consonant with the ordinary rules of Providence, and the laws given for the government of the rest of the universe. They have found that the plentiful fall of the tropical rains produced every year at the same time, by the action of a violent sun, has been uniformly, without miracle, the cause of Egypt being regularly overflowed.

THE sun being nearly stationary for some days in the tropic of Capricorn, the air there becomes so much rarified, that the heavier winds, charged with watery particles, rush in upon it from the Atlantic on the west, and from the Indian Ocean on the east. The fourth wind, moreover, loaded with heavy vapour, condensed in that high ridge of mountains not far south of the Line, which forms a spine to the peninsula of Africa, and, running northward with the other two, furnish wherewithal to restore the equilibrium.

THE sun, having thus gathered such a quantity of vapours as it were to a focus, now puts them in motion, and drawing them after it in its rapid progress northward, on the 7th of January, for two years together, seemed to have extended its power to the atmosphere of Gondar, when, for the first time, there appeared in the sky white, dappled, thin clouds, the sun being then distant  $34^{\circ}$  from the zenith, without any one cloudy or dark speck having been seen for several months before. Advancing to the Line with increased velocity, and describing larger spirals, the sun brings on a few drops of rain at Gondar the 1st of March, being then distant  $5^{\circ}$  from the zenith; these are greedily absorbed by the thirsty soil, and this seems to be the farthest extent of the sun's influence, capable of causing rain, which then only falls in large drops, and lasts but a few minutes: the rainy season, however, begins most seriously upon its arrival at the zenith of every place, and these rains continue constant and increasing after he has passed it, in his progress northward. Before this, green boughs and leaves appear floating in the Bahar el Abiad, and shew that, in the latitude where it rises, the rains are already abundant. The Galla, who inhabit, or have passed that river, give account of its situation, which lies, as far as I could ever calculate, about  $5^{\circ}$  from the Line.

IN April, all the rivers in Amhara, Begemder, and Lassa, first discoloured, and then beginning to swell, join the Nile in the several parts of its course nearest them; the river then, from the height of its angle of inclination, forces itself through the stagnant lake without mixing with it. In the beginning of May, hundreds of streams pour themselves from Gojam, Damot, Matsha, and Dembea, into the lake Tzana, which had become low by intense evaporation, but

now begins to fill insensibly, and contributes a large quantity of water to the Nile, before it falls down the cataract of Alata. In the beginning of June, the sun having now passed all Abyssinia, the rivers there are all full, and then is the time of the greatest rains in Abyssinia, while it is for some days, as it were, stationary in the tropic of Cancer.

THESE rains are collected by the four great rivers in Abyssinia; the Mareb, the Bowiha, Tacazzé, and the Nile. All these principal, and their tributary streams, would, however, be absorbed, nor be able to pass the burning deserts, or find their way into Egypt, were it not for the White River, which, rising in a country of almost perpetual rain, joins to it a never-failing stream, equal to the Nile itself.

IN the first days of May, the sun, in his way to the northern tropic, is vertical over the small village of Gerri, the limit of the tropical rains. Not all the influence of the sun, which has already past its zenith, and for many days has been as it were stationary within a few degrees of it over Syene, in the tropic of Cancer, can bring them one inch farther to the northward, neither do any dews fall there as might be reasonably expected from the quantity of fresh and exhalable water that is then running in the Nile, though it passes close by that village, and after, through that wild and dreary desert. The fact is certain, and surely curious; the cause perhaps unknown, although it may be guessed at.

I CONCEIVE, that mountains are necessary to occasion either rain or dew, by arresting and stopping the great quantity

tity of vapour which is here driven southward before the Etesian winds. Now, all that country between Gerri and Syene is flat and desert, so that this interruption is wanting; and it is owing to the same cause, that the bounds of the tropical rains do stop farther to the southward as you travel westward, and in place of lat  $16^{\circ}$ , which is their limits at Gerri, they are confined within lat.  $14^{\circ}$  in that part of the kingdom of Sennaar which lies south and west of that capital, where all is free from mountains till you come to those of Kuara and Fazuclo.

YET although the sun's influence when at its greatest, is not strong enough to draw the boundaries of the summer's rain farther north than Gerri, all the time that it is in the tropic of Cancer at its greatest distance, these rains are then at their heaviest throughout all Abyssinia; and Egypt, and all its labours, would soon be swept into the Mediterranean did not the sun now begin to change its sphere of action by hastening its progress southward.

FROM Syene the sun passes over the desert, and arrives at Gerri; here he reverses the effects his influence had when on his passage northward; for whereas, in his whole course of declination northward, from the Line to Gerri, he brought on the rains at every place where he became vertical, so now he cuts off those rains the instant he returns to the zenith of each of those places passing over Abyssinia in his journey southward, till arrived at the Line, in the autumnal equinox, his influence ceases on the side of Abyssinia, and goes to extend itself to the southern hemisphere. And so precisely is this stupendous operation calculated, that, on the 25th of September, only three days after the equinox, the

Nile is generally found at Cairo to be at its highest, and begins to diminish every day after.

THUS far as to the cause and progress of the Nile's inundation in our northern hemisphere; but so much light and confirmation is to be drawn from our consideration of the remainder of the sun's journey southward, that I am persuaded my following him thither will require no apology to my philosophic or inquisitive reader.

IMMEDIATELY after the sun has passed the Line he begins the rainy season to the southward, still as he approaches the zenith of each place; but the situation and necessities of this country being varied, the manner of promoting the inundation is changed. A high chain of mountains run from about 6° south all along the middle of the continent towards the Cape of Good Hope, and intersects the southern part of the peninsula nearly in the same manner that the river Nile does the northern. A strong wind from the south, stopping the progress of the condensed vapours, dashes them against the cold summits of this ridge of mountains, and forms many rivers which escape in the direction either east or west, as the level presents itself. If this is towards the west, they fall down the sides of the mountains into the Atlantic, and if on the east, into the Indian Ocean. Now all these would be useless to man, were the Etesian winds to reign, as one would think must be the case, analagous to what passes in Egypt; nay, if any one wind prevailed, these rivers, swelled with rains, would not be navigable, but another wise and providential disposition has remedied this.

THE clouds, drawn by the violent action of the sun, are condensed, then broken, and fall as rain on the top of this high ridge, and swell every river, while a wind from the ocean on the east blows like a monsoon up each of these streams in a direction contrary to their current, during the whole time of the inundation, and this enables boats to ascend into the western parts of Sofala, and the interior country to the mountains, where lies the gold. The same effect, from the same cause, is produced on the western side towards the Atlantic; the high ridge of mountains being placed between the different countries west and east, is at once the source of their riches, and of those rivers which conduct to the treasures which would be otherwise inaccessible in the eastern parts of the kingdoms of Benin, Congo, and Angola.

THERE are three remarkable appearances attending the inundation of the Nile; every morning in Abyssinia is clear, and the sun shines. About nine, a small cloud, not above four feet broad, appears in the east, whirling violently round as if upon an axis, but, arrived near the zenith, it first abates its motion, then loses its form, and extends itself greatly, and seems to call up vapours from all opposite quarters. These clouds having attained nearly the same height, rush against each other with great violence, and put me always in mind of Elisha foretelling rain on Mount Carmel\*. The air, impelled before the heaviest mass, or swiftest mover, makes an impression of its own form in the collection of clouds opposite, and the moment it has taken possession of the space made

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\* 1 Kings, chap. xviii. ver. 43.

made to receive it, the most violent thunder possible to be conceived instantly follows, with rain; after some hours, the sky again clears, with a wind at north, and it is always disagreeably cold when the thermometer is below  $63^{\circ}$ .

THE second thing remarkable is the variation of the thermometer; when the sun is in the southern tropic,  $36^{\circ}$  distant from the zenith of Gondar, it is seldom lower than  $72^{\circ}$ ; but it falls to  $60^{\circ}$  and  $59^{\circ}$  when the sun is immediately vertical; so happily does the approach of rain compensate the heat of a too-scorching sun.

THE third is, that remarkable stop in the extent of the rains northward, when the sun, that has conducted the vapours from the Line, and should seem, now more than ever, to be in possession of them, is here over-ruled suddenly, till, on its return to the zenith of Gerri, again it resumes the absolute command over the rain, and reconducts it to the Line to furnish distant deluges to the southward.

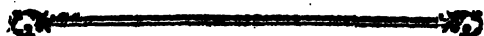
I CANNOT omit observing here the particular disposition of this peninsula of Africa; supposing a meridian line, drawn through the Cape of Good Hope, till it meets the Mediterranean where it bounds Egypt, and that this meridian has a portion of latitude that will comprehend all Abyssinia, Nubia, and Egypt below it, this section of the continent, from south to north, contains  $64^{\circ}$  divided equally by the equator, so that, from the Line to the southmost point of Africa, is  $32^{\circ}$ ; and northward, to the edge of the Mediterranean, is  $32^{\circ}$  also: now, if on each side we set off  $2^{\circ}$ , these are the limits of the variable winds, and we have then  $30^{\circ}$  south, and  $30^{\circ}$  north, within which space, on both sides, the

trade-winds are confined ; set off again  $16^{\circ}$  from the  $32^{\circ}$ , that is, half the distance between the Cape of Good Hope and the Line, and  $16^{\circ}$  between the Line and the Mediterranean, and you have the limits of the tropical rains,  $16^{\circ}$  on each side of the equator : again, take half of  $16^{\circ}$ , which is  $8^{\circ}$ , and add it to the limit of the tropical rains, that is to  $16^{\circ}$ , and you have  $24^{\circ}$ , which is the situation of the tropics.—There is something very remarkable in this disposition.



CHAP.





## CHAP. XVI.

*Egypt not the Gift of the Nile—Ancient Opinion refuted—Modern Opinion contrary to Proof and Experience.*

**I**T is here we shall discuss a question often agitated, whether Egypt owed its existence to the Nile, and whether it was formerly an arm of the sea, but in process of time, being filled up by the quantity of mud which the Nile deposited in its inundation, it at length became firm land, above the surface of the waters? I believe this is the general opinion, as well of the books, as of the greatest part of travellers of the present age; it therefore merits examination, whether it is founded in fact and observation, or whether it is to be ranked among the old and ill-supported traditions fancifully now again brought into fashion.

EGYPT is a valley bounded on the right and left by very rugged mountains; it must, therefore, occur to any one that  
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the Nile, being a torrent falling from very high ground in Ethiopia, were this valley concave, the violent rapidity, or motion, would be much likelier to carry away mud and soil, than to leave it behind in a state to accumulate.

THE land of Egypt slopes gently from the middle of the valley to the foot of the mountains on each side, so that the center is really the highest part of the valley, and in the middle of this runs the Nile \*. At right angles with the stream large trenches are cut to the foot of the mountains, in which canals the water enters, and insensibly flows down to the end of these trenches, where it diffuses itself over the level ground.

As the river swells, these canals fill with water, which goes seeking a level to the foot of the mountains; so that now the flood, which begins to reſtagnate towards the bank of the river, acquires no motion, as the calishes are formed at right angles to the ſtream. Sometimes, indeed, the river is ſo high, when the rains in Ethiopia are exceſſive, that the back-water joins the current of the Nile, when immediately it communicates its motion to the ſtagnant water, and ſweeps away every thing that is planted into the ſea. It is a miſtake then to aſſert,—the fuller the Nile, the better for Egypt.

IT has been ſaid by various authors, that it was neceſſary Egypt ſhould be meaſured every year, on account of  
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\* See this figure in Dr Shaw, chap. ii. ſect. 3. p. 385.

the quantity of mud which the Nile brought down by its inundation, which so covered the land-marks, that no proprietor knew or could discover the limits of his own farm, and that this annual necessity first gave rise to the science of Geometry \*. How or when Geometry was first known and practised, is not my business in this place to inquire, though I think the origin here given is a very probable one. The land of Egypt was certainly measured annually: it is as certainly so at this very time; and if so, the present reason for this is probably the very one which first gave rise to it; but that this is not owing to the mud of the Nile, will appear on the slightest consideration; for if Egypt increase a foot in a hundred years, one year's increase of soil could be but the one hundredth part of a foot, which could hide no land-mark whatever; and we see to this day those in Egypt were huge blocks of granite often with gigantic heads at the end of them; which the Nile, at the rate Herodotus fixes, of a foot in 100 years, as being added to the soil, would not cover in several thousand years.

It is absurd to suppose that the Nile is to bring down an equal quantity of soil every year from the mountains of Abyssinia; whatever was the case at first when this river began to flow, we are sure now, that almost every river and brook in Abyssinia runs in a bed of hard stone, the earth having been long removed; and the rivers now cannot furnish from their rocky beds what they first did from their earthy bottoms, when Egypt was supposed, according to Herodotus, to have its foundation laid in the floods;

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\* Herod. lib. ii. p. 107. 108. 109.

floods; and therefore, on the first consideration, this annual and equal increase must be impossible.

At Basboch, before the Nile enters Sennaar, I made several hundred trials upon its sediment, as it then came down from the cultivated country of Abyssinia; I thereby found, this sediment surprisingly small, being a mixture of fat earth, and a small quantity of sand. At the junction of the Nile and Astaboras I did the same, taking up the water from the middle of the stream, and, having evaporated it afterwards, I found little more sediment than at Sennaar; the water was indeed whiter, and the greatest part of the sediment was sand. I repeated this experiment at Syené with the utmost attention, where the Nile leaves Nubia, and enters Egypt, and I found the quantity of sediment fully nine times increased from what it was at Sennaar, and in it only a trifle of black earth, all the rest being sand. The experiment at Rosetto was not so often repeated as the others; but the result was, that, in the strength of the inundation, the sediment consisted mostly of sand, and, towards the end, was much the greater part of earth. I think these experiments conclusive, as neither the Nile coming fresh from Abyssinia, nor the Atbara, though joined by the Mareb, likewise from the same country, brought any great quantity of soil from thence.

It was at Syené that the water should have been most charged with mud, for all the accession it was to bring to Egypt was then in its stream; but there the chief part of the sediment was sand, fanned and ventilated with perpetual hot winds, and spread on the surface of the burning desert, never refreshed with the dew of heaven. In that dreary  
desert,

desert, between Gooz and Syene, we saw huge pillars of this light sand; their base in the earth, and heads in the clouds, crossing the wide expanse in various directions, and, upon its becoming calm in the evening, falling to pieces, and burying themselves in the Nile, with whose stream they mixed like an impalpable powder, and were hurried down the river, to compose the many sandy islands we see in the course of it.

It seems to be an established fact, that water of every sort, fresh and salt, that of rivers, and what is stagnant, has from early times sensibly diminished through the whole world; if then the land of Egypt has been continually rising every year, while the quantity of water that was to cover it has become less, or at least not increased, dearth in these latter years must have been frequent in Egypt, for want of the Nile's rising to a proper height; but this is so far from being the case, that, in these last 34 years\*, there has not been one season of scarcity from the lowness of the Nile, although the rise having been too great, and the waters too abundant, have thrice in that time occasioned famine by carrying away the millet.

If the land of Egypt increased (as Herodotus says) one foot in 100 years, this addition must have appeared in the most ancient public monuments: now, the very base of all the obelisks in Upper Egypt, are bare and visible, and even the paved plane, laid visibly on purpose to receive the Gnomonical shade, is not covered, nor scarcely out of its level,  
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\* Several Arabian MSS. attest this.

and these small deviations are apparently owing to the falling of neighbouring buildings. There are in the plain, immediately before Thebes, two Colossal statues\*, obviously designed for Nilometers, covered with hieroglyphics, as well as more modern inscriptions; these statues are uncovered to the lowest part of their base; whereas we should have now been walking on ground nearly equal in height to their heads. The same may be said of every public monument; if there had been any truth in the surface of Egypt increasing a foot in a hundred years.

It appears, at least as far as Hadrian's time, that if the *pecunia* of the Greeks be the peck of the present Egyptians, the same quantity of water overflowed Egypt as now.

THE advocates for the supposed increase of the land of Egypt on a foot in 100 years, pressed by this observation, which they cannot contradict, have chose to evade it, by supposing, without foundation, that a smaller measure of the Nile's increase had been introduced by the Saracens to obviate the Nile's scantiness, and this has landed them in a palpable absurdity; for, while the Nile failed, the introduction of a lesser measure would not have increased the crop; and, if the quantity of grain had been exacted when it was not produced, this would have only doubled the distress, and made it more apparent; this would never have occasioned the joyful cry, *Wafaa Ullah*, God has given us our desire, *men Jibbel, alla Jibbel*, the Nile has overflowed, from the mountains on one side of the valley to the mountains on the other. Besides,

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\* Shaamy and Taamy, of whom we have already spoken.

sides, there is no country in the world, perhaps, but where this trick may be played with impunity, except in Egypt, for a reason that I am about to explain.

THE extension of the land of Egypt northward, the distance between it and Cyprus, and the situation of Canopus, all shew, that no or very little alteration has been made these 3000 years. Dr Shaw, and the other writers, who are advocates for what has been advanced by Herodotus \*, that Egypt hath been produced by the Nile, have deserted this ground of maintaining their hypothesis, and have recourse to the Nilometer to prove, that the soil has increased in height, and that a greater quantity of water is necessary now to overflow the land of Egypt than was required in the days of Homer.

If the first part of their assertion can be proved, I shall make no sort of difficulty of giving up the other. But I rather conceive, that none of those who have written upon this subject hitherto, whatever degree of learning and information they may have possessed, have possessed sufficient *data* to explain this subject intelligibly. It seems, indeed, to have remained with *the source of the river*, a secret reserved for latter times.

It will be necessary for us first to consider what the use of a Nilometer was, for what cause it was made, and by whom.

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\* Herod. Eut. sect. 4, 5. Diod. Sic. lib. iii. p. 101. Arist. Meteorol. lib. i. cap. 14.

It is scarcely necessary to observe, that, in every state or society, the product or revenue should be known, as well as what will be wanted for the supply of the necessities of the people. Now, it was only the ground overflowed by the Nile that could produce grain for the subsistence of the inhabitants and revenue of the state.

THE first consideration, then, was, to know how much of the land of Egypt was overflowed in a given term of years, and how much grain was produced upon that average. This could only be ascertained by measuring, and they, therefore, settled with precision the land that was overflowed from the earliest times, and do so to this day. These actual measurements gave them a *maximum* and a *minimum*, which furnished them with a mean, and thus they were in possession of all the principles necessary for making a Nilometer, by dividing a pillar into corresponding cubits, and divisions of cubits called digits, placing it also firm and perpendicular, so as to be liable to no alteration or injury, though in the middle of the stream.

THE first stated measure was certainly that mentioned in scripture, the cubit, *secundum cubitum virilis manus*, measuring from the center of the round bone in the elbow to the point of the middle finger\*. This is still the measure of all unpolished nations, but no medium or term, expressive of its exact contents, having been applied, writers have differed as to the length of this cubit, and no standard existing to which it might be referred, a great deal of confusion.

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\* Deut. chap. iii. ver. 11.



sion has thereupon followed. Dr Arbuthnot\* says, that there are two cubits in scripture, the one, 1 foot 9 inches, and  $\frac{8}{10}\frac{8}{10}\frac{8}{10}$  parts of an inch, according to our measure, being the 4th part of a fathom, twice the span, and six times the palm. The other is equal to 1 foot  $\frac{8}{10}\frac{2}{10}\frac{4}{10}$  parts of a foot, or the 400th part of a stadium. I shall not inquire into the grounds he goes on; I believe, however, that neither are precisely the ancient cubit of the east, but both are too large; at least the Egyptian I found to be very exactly 1 foot  $5\frac{1}{2}$  inches, which is 2 inches more than father Merfenne† has made his Hebrew cubit. But this is of less consequence to us now, because Herodotus‡ informs us, that in his time, and probably at the first institution of a Nilometer, the measure was the Samian cubit, which is about 18 inches English, or half an inch less than the ancient cubit.

THE reader will then consider, that the divisions of this Nilometer were a representation of certain facts: That the Nile's reaching to such a division corresponded to a certain quantity of corn that was sown, a proportion of the produce of which was to be paid to the king, the rest to go to the landlord and the labourer.

THE Nilometer then ascertained the contract between king and people on these terms, That, in the event of so much corn being produced by the land of Egypt, such a tribute was to be paid: But, in case a certain quantity of ground, less than that, was overflowed, or, which is the same thing, a lesser quantity of grain was produced, then the  
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\* Encyclop. voce Cubit. † Vide Encyclop. voce Cubit. ‡ Herod. lib. ii. sect. 168. p. 149.

king was not to exact his tribute, because it was understood such a quantity only was produced as was sufficient for the maintenance of the landholder and labourer. This was referred to the Nilometer, whose division shewed to what height the Nile had risen. Men appointed by the sovereign were to superintend this Nilometer, and to publish the height of the Nile, whilst the reason why the king was to have the direction of the Nilometer, and not his subjects, was very obvious, though it has not yet been understood, because the king could not gain by substituting false measures, whereas the people might.

THE Nile, though in an average of years it brought down nearly the same quantity of water, yet, in particular ones, varied sometimes more and sometimes less. It is likewise observed, like most other rivers, to run more on one side of the valley for some years than to the other. The consequence of this varying and deviation was, that though, upon the whole, the quantity indicated by the Nilometer was the same, yet nobody knew his *quota*, or what proportion of the whole was drawn from the property of each individual; as for this they were obliged to apply to actual mensuration. Supposing a man's property was a section of the land of Egypt, of 12,000 feet from the brink of the river to the mountain, and of any given breadth, 4000 feet of this perhaps were overflowed, whilst the other 8000 remained dry, and above the level of the water. The tenant, after having measured, did not till then know what his farm of 12,000 feet would give him for that year, only 4000 of which had been overflowed by the water, and was then fit for sowing; for this he paid his landlord the highest rent laid upon cultivated

ted land. But the 8000 feet that still remained were not equally useless, though not overflowed by the inundation; for 4000 of the 8000, which lay by the bank of the river, could be overflowed by machines, and by the labour of man, when, for a certain time, the river was high enough to be within reach of machinery; so that the value of this 4000 feet to the farmer was equal to the first, *minus* the expence and trouble it cost him for watering it by labour; for this, then, he paid one half of the rent only to the landlord.

Now, though it was known that the whole farm was 12,000 feet, yet, till it was measured, no one could say how much of that would be overflowed by the Nile alone, and so manured without expence; how much was to be watered by labour, and so pay half rent; and how much was to be incapable of any such cultivation, and for that year equally useless to landlord and tenant. I speak not of a fact that happened in antiquity, but one that is necessary and in practice at this very hour; and though a man, by this mensuration, attains to the knowledge of what his farm produces this same year, this is no general rule, as his cultivated land next year may be doubled, or perhaps reduced to one-fourth; and his neighbour, on the other side of the Nile, may in his farm make up the correspondent deficiency, or excess; and the average quantity produced by them both being the same, the degree of the Nilometer will be the same likewise.

FROM this it is obvious to infer, that there are two points of great advantage to the tenant: The one is, when it is

just high enough not to pay the meery \*, for then he has all the harvest to himself, and pays nothing, though he has very near the same quantity as if he was subject to the tax. The other is, when near the whole of these 12,000 feet is overflowed by the Nile, but before the water is in contact with the current of the river; for then, though he is liable to pay the meery, he has sown the greatest part of his land possible, without additional labour or expence; more than this is loss, for then the water of the inundation is put likewise in motion, and all the floating pulverised earth that has been trode into an impalpable powder, during March, April, and May, is swept away by the current into the sea, and nothing left but a bare, cold, hard till, which produces little, and is not easily pulverised by the poor instruments of husbandry there in use, when neither farmer nor landholder pays any thing, because, indeed, there is not any receipt.

HOWEVER, from this uncertainty one thing arises which does not seem to have been understood; for the tenant, not knowing precisely the quantity of seed that he may want, comes to his farm unprovided, and, being uncertain of its produce, takes his land only from year to year; the landlord furnishes him with seed †, and even with all labouring utensils.

AND here I am to explain what I have before advanced, what to some will seem a paradox, That the substituting

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\* The king's yearly land-tax, or rent.

† Gen. chap. xlvii. ver. 20 & 23.

false measures in the Nilometer by the sovereign is absolutely impracticable. Supposing the height of the Nilometer, when at 8 cubits, shewed that there was just corn enough to maintain the inhabitants, and that the tenant knew, by the quantity of land measured, that he had barely what was to pay his rent and support his family; this he must know before he sowed, because he measured immediately after the inundation; and this he must know likewise by the corn he borrows for seed from his landlord, who, as I have said, furnishes his tenant both with seed and labouring utensils. If, then, he finds he can barely maintain himself, and not pay his rent, upon the proclamation at the Nilometer, he deserts his farm, and neither plows nor sows\*, but flies to Palestine to the Arabs, or into the cities, and brings famine along with him. The next year there is a plague, and sweeps all those poor wretches, in a bad state of health by living upon bad food, into their graves, so that the introduction, of a supposed false measure, directly advanced by Dr Shaw†, and often alluded to by others, but always without possibility of foundation, is one of the many errors he has fallen into.

He knew nothing but of the Delta, never was in Upper, and no considerable time even in Lower Egypt, but when the Nile had overflowed it, and I suppose never conversed with a fellah, or Egyptian peasant, in his life. All his *wonders* are in

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\* This was apparently the reason why Joseph, who had bought not only the lands, but the people of Egypt likewise, transferred them from farms, not convenient for them, to others where they could thrive. The same they do spontaneously at this day, now they are free.

† Dr Shaw, chap. ii. sect. 3. p. 383.

in the land of *Zoan*\*, and his observations should have reached no further, because they are not fact, but fanciful imaginations of his own; not from any bad intention, but because he never was in the way of being better informed, but determined not to abandon a system he had once formed.

HERODOTUS† mentions, that in the time of Mæris, when the minimum came to be 8 Samian cubits, all Egypt below Memphis was overflowed, but that in his days it took 16 cubits, or at least 15, to put the same land in like condition for cultivation; or, in other words, the minimum, when they laid their meery, was 16, or at least 15 cubits in his time; and the uncertainty of these two terms shews, that there were unaccountable inequalities, even in his days, as we all find there have been ever since. But I must here beg leave to ask, why we should believe Herodotus knew the management of the Nilometer, more than travellers have done since, as he tells us constantly throughout this part of his history, that when he inquired of the priests concerning the Nile, they would tell him nothing about it‡?

IN Mæris's time there were great lakes dug, as Herodotus says ||, to carry off the superfluous water, to what place is not said, but surely into the desert for the use of the Arabs. Now, unless we knew what time these lakes were opened to receive the stream, we do not know whether it was the evacuation by the lake, or scarcity of the water that impeded the rise of the Nile upon the Nilometer. We have no account.

\* Psalm lxxviii. ver. 12. † Herod. ent. sect. 13. ‡ Herod. lib. ii. c. 2. 10

|| Herod. lib. ii. sect. 4. 101. and 149.

account of these transactions, and we shall be less inclined to rely upon them, when I shall shew, that the Nilometer could be of no use in solving this question at all, either in Herodotus's days, or any time since, without a previous knowledge of several other circumstances never yet taken into the calculation, and of which Herodotus must have been ignorant.

BUT let us grant that the Nile in Menes's time rose only 8 cubits, and in the days of Herodotus to 16, let us see if, at certain periods afterwards, it kept to any thing like that proportion. Above 400 years after Herodotus, Strabo travelled in Egypt; he went through the whole country from Alexandria to beyond Syene and the first cataract; and as he is an historian whose character is established, both for veracity and sagacity, we may receive what he says as unexceptionable evidence, especially as he travelled in such company as it is not probable the priests could have refused him any thing. Now Strabo † says, that, in his days, 8 cubits were a *minimum*, or the *Wafaa Ullah* of the Nile's increase; therefore, from Menes's time to Strabo there is not an inch difference in the *minimum*, and this includes the space of 1400 years.

It may be said, indeed, that the passage in Strabo imports, that, in the time of Ptolemy, by a particular care of the banks and canals, the Nile at 8 pecks (or cubits) enabled the Egyptians to pay their meery without hardship; but this was by particular industry, more than what had been  
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\* Strabo, lib. xiii. p. 945.

† Strabo, lib. xvii. p. 915.

in common use, and this, too, I conceive to be Strabo's meaning. But let us compute from Herodotus, who says that 16, or at least 15, were necessary in his time, whilst Strabo informs us, that, before Petronius exerted himself as to the banks and calishes just mentioned, the extreme abundance must then have been at 12, and the *minimum* at 10. Now, by this passage, beyond all exception, it is clear that there could have been no increase indicated by the Nilometer; for 10 cubits watered the whole land of Egypt sufficiently in Strabo's time, whereas 16 and 15 were necessary in the days of Herodotus: and I must likewise observe, that if we should suppose the same industry and attention used in Mæris's time that was in Petronius's, (and there is every reason to induce us to think there was) then the proof is positive, that there was no difference in the soil of Egypt indicated by the Nilometer for the first 1400 years.

FROM this let us descend to Hadrian, about 100 years afterwards. We know from Pliny\*, and from an inscription upon a medal of great brass of Hadrian's, who was himself in Egypt, that 16 cubits were then the fiscal term or rise of the Nile, by which the Egyptians paid their rent; and this is precisely what Herodotus says, in his time, was no more than sufficient.

ABOUT the beginning of the 4th century, in the emperor Julian's reign†, 15 cubits were a sufficient minimum to incur the payment of the tribute, and this is one of the terms that

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\* Plin. lib. xxxvi. cap. 7. Philost. de icon. Nili.

† Julian. Epist. egdiōio prefecto Egypti.



that Herodotus fixes upon, as being sufficient to oblige the payment in his days; and the other is 16, or a cubit more; so that if the Nilometer proves any thing at all, it is this, that presumptively the Nile has never increased from Mæris to Petronius's, or in 1400 years, and certainly that, if it has not diminished, it has not increased for 700 years from Herodotus to the emperor Julian.

PROCOPIUS, in his first book, I think, says, that 18 peeks was too full a Nile, and occasioned dearth by its quantity. But, in the middle of the 6th century, he tells\* us it required 18 cubits for a minimum, by which Egypt was to pay the meery; so that in 100 years from Julian to Justinian, the minimum had increased three cubits, which was  $4\frac{1}{2}$  feet; not one foot in 100 years as the proposition bears; and this would prove too much, if it was true, but it is impossible.

Thus far, then, we are at liberty to say, that, as long as Egypt was a Greek kingdom, no visible alteration or increase of the soil can be fairly established from history or inspection.

\* Procop. lib. iii. de Reb. Goth.



## CHAP. XVII.

*The same Subject continued—Nilometer what. How divided and measured.*

**I**N the 7th century a revolution happened that stops our Grecian account from proceeding farther, Egypt was conquered by an ignorant and barbarous enemy, the Saracen, and Amru Ibn el Aas was governor of Egypt for Omar, the second Caliph after Mahomet. Omar was a foreigner, conqueror, bigot and a tyrant; he destroyed the Grecian Nilometer from motives of religion, the same which had before moved him to burn the library of Alexandria; and after, with the same degree of *sound judgment*, determined to establish his empire at Medina, in the middle of the peninsula of Arabia, a country without water, and surrounded on all sides with barren sands; but he was nevertheless desirous of feeding his famished Saracens with the wheat of Egypt, a province he had subdued; for this purpose he ordered Amru to begin a canal from the Nile to the Red Sea, to carry the wheat to the

Arabian Gulf, and thence to Yambo, the port of Medina on that gulf.

THE traitor Greeks, who had delivered the country to the Saracens. had probably informed him of the great plenty which constantly reigned in Egypt, and which every body had an opportunity of knowing by the cheapness of grain at the market.

OMAR thought that a larger tribute was due to put the conquerors a little more upon a footing with the conquered ; for Egypt, which had once 20,000 cities, had not then the tenth part of them. Having therefore a larger extent to cultivate, with the same quantity of water, it produced more grain, and at the same time having fewer people to eat it, nothing was less oppressive than that a part of the surplus of the produce should go in augmentation of the tribute. For this purpose, following the very weak lights of his own judgment, he introduced a different measure on the Nilometer, and the consequence of that measure, imposed by a conqueror, affected the people (not reflecting upon their decrease in population) so much, that they prepared to fly the country; from which it immediately would have followed, that all Egypt would have lain desolate and uncultivated, and all Arabia been starved.

THEY were perfectly acquainted with their ancient measure, and it is probable that Omar made an excessive addition by the new Nilometers which he had erected ; so that faith being thereby broken between the government and people, the Egyptians set about watching the Nile upon the Nilometer with its new measure, as the only way of being informed when poverty or famine was to overtake them. This being  
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told to Omar, he ordered the new Nilometer to be demolished; but as it had been part of the complaint to him, that their counting the divisions of the Mikeas \* was the reason why the people were kept in continual terror, he shut up the access to Christians, and that prohibition continues in Cairo to this day; and, instead of permitting ocular inspection, he ordered the daily increase to be proclaimed, but in a manner so unintelligible, that the Egyptians in general no longer understood it, nor do they understand it now; for, beginning at a given point, which was not the bottom of the Nilometer, he went on, telling the increase by subtracting from the upper division; so that as nobody knew the lower point from which he began, although they might comprehend how much it had risen since the crier proclaimed its increase, yet they never could know the height of the water that was in the Nilometer when the proclamation began, nor what the division was to which it had ascended on the pillar.

To understand this, let us premise, that, on the point of the island Rhoda, between Geeza and Cairo, near the middle of the river, but nearer to Geeza, is a round tower, and in that an apartment, in the middle of which is a very neat well, or cistern, lined with marble, to which the Nile has free access, through a large opening like an embrasure, the bottom of the well being on the same level with the bottom of the river. In the middle of this well rises a thin column, as far as I can remember, of eight faces of blue and white marble, to the foot of which, if you are permitted to descend,

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\* Or Nilometer.

you are then on the same plane with the foot of the column and bottom of the river. This pillar is divided into 20 peeks, called Draa El Belledy, of 22 inches each\*.

THE two lowermost peeks are not divided at all, but are left absolutely without mark, to stand for the quantity of sludge the water deposits there, and which occupies the place of water. Two peeks are then divided on the right hand into 24 digits each; then, on the left, four peeks are divided each into 24 digits; then, on the right, four; and, on the left, another four: again, four on the right, which complete the number of 18 peeks from the first division marked on the pillar each of 22 inches. The whole, marked and unmarked, amounts to  $36\frac{9}{12}$  feet English.

ON the night of St John, when the Nufta has fallen, that is, when they see the rain-water from Ethiopia is so mixed with the Nile that at Cairo it is become exhalable, and falls down in dews upon the earth, which till that time it never does, they then begin to cry, having five peeks of water marked on the Mikeas, and two unmarked for the sludge, of which they take no notice in the proclamation. Their first proclamation, suppose the Nile hath risen 12 digits, is 12 from six, or it wants 12 digits to be six peeks. When it rises three more, it is nine from six, or, *Tiffa am Sitte*, and so it goes on, subtracting the digits from the upper number, without giving you any information what that six is, or that they began to count from five, which I suppose is the assumed depth of the Nile before it begins to increase.

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† Vid. geometrical elevation and plan of the Mikeas.

WHEN the river has risen on the Mikeas eight peeks and 23 digits, they then call *Wabad am erba Tush*, i. e. one from 14, five peeks of water being left marked in the Mikeas, but only eight of augmentation that has risen upon the column, according to the divisions, which make in all 13 peeks and 23 digits, which wants one from being nine of augmentation, and that being added, they cry *Wafaa Ullab*, which obliges the country to the payment of the meery. Again, suppose 17 peeks, or cubits, and 23 digits to stand on the column, the cry is *Wabad am temen Tush*, i. e. one from 18, and, upon this being filled, and the divisions complete by a certain day in August, the next is *Asbareen*, 20, or, *men Fibbel, alla Fibbel*, from mountain to mountain, that is, 18 peeks marked on the pillar, and two unmarked at the foot of it, supposed to be covered with mud. All the land of Egypt is then fitted for cultivation; the great canal at Mansoura, and several others, are opened, which convey the water into the desert, and hinder any further stagnation on the fields, though there is still a great part of the water to come from Ethiopia, but which would not drain soon enough to fit the land for tillage, were the inundation suffered to go on.

Now, from these 16 peeks the *Wafaa Ullab* if we deduce 5, which were in the well, and marked on the column when the crier began, there will have been but 11 peeks of rise as a minimum, which still made the meery due, or 15, deducing 5 from 20, the maximum, *men Fibbel, alla Fibbel*, the increase that fits all Egypt for cultivation, after which is loss and danger. Therefore, suppose the 16 peeks on the medal of Hadrian to have been the minimum or fiscal term, we must infer, that the same quantity of inundation produced the

the *Wafaa Ullab* or payment of the meery, in Hadrian's time, that it does at this day, and consequently the land of Egypt has not increased since his time, that is, in the last 1600 years.

As a summary of the whole relating to this periodical inundation of the Nile, I shall here deliver my opinion, which I think, as it is founded upon ancient history, consonant to that of intermediate times, and, invincibly established by modern observation, can never be overturned by any argument whatever. And this I shall do as shortly as possible, lest, having anticipated it in part by reflections explanatory of the narrative, it may at first sight have the appearance of repetition.

It is agreed on all hands, that Egypt, in early ages, had water enough to overflow the ground that composed it. It was then a narrow valley as it is now; having been early the seat of the arts, crowded with a multitude of people, enriched by the most flourishing and profitable trade, and its numbers supplied and recruited when needful by the immense nations to the southward of it, having grain and all the necessaries and luxuries of life (oil excepted) for the great multitude which it fed, Egypt was averse to any communication with strangers till after the foundation of Alexandria.

THE first princes, after the building of Memphis, finding the land turn broader towards the Delta, whereas before it had been a narrow stripe confined between mountains; observing also that they had great command of water for fitting their land for cultivation, say, that great part of it ran



to waste without profit, which must have been the case, since it is so at this day: observing likewise, that the superabundance of water in the Nile did harm, and that the neighbouring sandy plains of Libya needed nothing but a judicious distribution of that water, to make it equal to the land of Egypt in fertility, and surpass it in the variety of natural productions, applied themselves very early to digging large lakes\*, that, preserving a degree of level sufficient, all the year long watered the dry deserts of Libya like so many fruitful showers. Geometry, architecture, and all the mechanic arts of those times, were employed to accomplish those designs. These canals and vast works communicated one with another to imprison the water, and set it again at liberty at proper times.

WE may be satisfied this was observed attentively all the time of the dynasties, or reigns of the Egyptian princes. After the accession of the Ptolemies, who were strangers, the multitude of inhabitants had greatly decreased. There was no occasion for works to water lands that were not peopled; so far as they were necessary for cities, gardens, and pleasure-grounds, they were always kept up. The larger and more extensive conduits, dykes, and sluices, though they were not used, were protected by their own solidity and strength from sudden ruin. Egypt, now confined within its ancient narrow valley, had water enough to keep it in culture, and make it still the granary of the inhabited world.

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\* We know that these lakes were dug, and in use as early as Moses's time. Exod. chap vii. ver. 19. chap. viii. ver. 5.

WHEN the ancient race of the Ptolemies ended, a scene of war and confusion, and bad government at home, was succeeded by a worse under foreigners abroad. The number of its inhabitants was still greatly decreased, and the valley had yet a quantity of water enough to fit it for annual culture.

IN the reign of the second emperor after the Roman conquest, Petronius Arbitrator, a man well known for taste and learning, was governor of Egypt. He saw with regret the decay of the magnificent works of the ancient native Egyptian princes. His sagacity penetrated the usefulness and propriety of those works. He saw they had once made Egypt populous and flourishing. Like a good citizen and subject of the state he served, and from a humane and rational attachment to that which he governed, he hoped to make it again as flourishing under the new government as it had been under the old. Like a man of sense, and master of his subject, he laughed at the dastardly spirit of the modern Egyptians, anxious and trembling lest the Nile should not overflow land enough to give them bread, when they had the power in their hands to procure plenty in abundance for six times the number of the people then in Egypt. To shew them this, he repaired their ancient works, raised their banks, refitted their sluices, and by thus imprisoning, as I may say, the inundation at a proper time in the beginning, he overflowed all Egypt with 8 pecks of water, as fully, and as effectually, as to the purposes of agriculture, as before and since it hath been with 16; and did not open the sluices to allow the water to run and waste in the desert (where there was now no longer any inhabitants), till the land of the valley of Egypt had been so well watered as only to need  
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that the inundation should retire in time to leave the farmer the ground firm enough for plowing and sowing.

LET any one read what I have already quoted from Strabo; it is just what I have here repeated, but in fewer words. Let him consider how fair an experiment this of Petronius was, that by re-establishing the works of Maris, and putting the inundation to the same profit that Maris did, he found the same quantity of water overflow the same quantity of ground, and consequently, that the land of Egypt had not been raised an inch from Maris's time to that of Petronius, above 1400 years.

Now the second part of the question comes, what difference of measure was made by the Saracens, and how does it now stand, after that period, as to the supposed rise of a foot in a hundred years? It is now above 1100 years since the † first of the Hegira, and near 900 years since the erection of the present Mikeas, which being equal to the period between Maris and Herodotus, and again to that between Herodotus and Julian, we should begin to be certain if any such increase in the land has ever, from Maris to the present time, been indicated by the Nilometer.

THE reader will perhaps be surprised, at what I am going to advance, That those writers, as well as their supporters who have pronounced so positively on this subject, have not furnished themselves with the *data* which are absolutely necessary to solve this question. Quantity is only to be as-

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certained by measure, yet none of them have settled that only medium of judging. The Mikeas, or pillar, is the subject to be measured, and they are not yet agreed within 20 feet of its extreme height, nor about the division of any part of it. As this accusation appears to be a strong one, I shall set down the proof for the reader's consideration, that it may not be supposed I mean to criticise improperly, or to do any author injustice.

AND first of the Mikeas. Mr Thomas Humes, a gentleman quoted by \* Dr Shaw, who had been a great many years a factor at Cairo, says, that the Mikeas is 58 feet English in height. Now, there is really no reason why such an enormous pillar should have been built, as the Nile would drown all Cairo before it was to rise to this height; accordingly, as we have seen, its height is not so much by near 22 feet. Dr Perry † next, who has wrote largely upon the subject, says, the Mikeas, or column, is divided into 24 peeks, and each peek or cubit is 24 inches nearly. Dr Pococke ‡, who travelled at the same time, agrees in the division of 24 peeks, but says that these peeks are unequal. The 16 lower he supposes are 21 inches, the 4 next, 24 inches, and the uppermost, 22. So that one of these gentlemen makes the Mikeas 43 feet, which is above six feet more than the truth, and the other 48, which is above 11; besides the second error which Dr Pococke has committed, by saying the divisions are of three different dimensions, when they really are not

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\* Shaw's Travels, chap. ii. sect. 9. p. 382. † Descript. of the East, vol. I. p. 256.

‡ A View of the Levant, p. 282. 284. 286.

not any one of them what he conceives, nor is the Mikeas divided unequally.

As for Mr Humes, who had lived long at Cairo, I would by no means be thought to insinuate a doubt of his veracity : There may, in change of times, be occasions when Christians may be admitted to the Mikeas, and be allowed to measure exactly. This, however, must be with a long rod, divided and brought on purpose, with a high stool or scaffold, and this sort of preparation would be attended with much danger if seen in the hand of a Christian without, and much more if he was to attempt to apply it to the column within. At Cairo a man may see or hear any thing he desires, by the ordinary means of gold, which no Turk can withstand or refuse ; but often one villain is paid for being your guide, and another villain, his brother, pays himself, by informing against you ; the end is mischief to yourself, which, if you are a stranger, generally involves also your friends. You are asked, What did you at the Mikeas when you know it is forbidden ? and your silence after that question is an acknowledgement of guilt ; sentence immediately follows, whatever it may be, and execution upon it. I rather am inclined to think, that though several Christians have obtained admission to the Mikeas, very few have had the means or instruments, and fewer still the courage, to measure this column exactly ; which leads me to believe, as Dr Shaw says, he procured the number of feet in a letter from Mr Humes, that the Doctor has mistaken 58 for 38, which, in a foreign hand, is very easily done ; it would then be 38, instead of 58 English feet, and to that number it might approach near enough, and the difference be accounted for, from an awkward manner of measuring with a trembling hand, there being then only a little more than one foot of error.

From what I have just now mentioned, I hope it is sufficiently plain to the reader, that the length and division of the column in the Mikeas, by which the quantity of water, and consequently the increase of the soil, was to be determined, was utterly unknown to those travellers who had undertaken this mode of determining it.

I SHALL now inquire, whether they were better instructed in the length of that measure, which, after the Saracen conquest, was introduced into the Nilometer, of Geeza, where it has remained unaltered since the year 245? Dr Shaw introduces the consideration of this subject by an enumeration of many different peeks, seven of which he quotes from Arabian authors, as being then in use. First, the Homaraeus  $1\frac{1}{2}$  digit of the common cubit. 2. The Hafamean, or greater peek, of 24 digits. 3. The Belalaan, less than the Hafamean. 4. The black cubit less than the Belalaan  $2\frac{1}{2}$  digits. 5. The Jossippæan  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a digit less than the black cubit. 6. The Chord, or Alaba,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  digit less than the black peek. 7. The Maharanus,  $\frac{1}{2}$  digit less than the black cubit\*. Now, I will appeal to any one to what all this information amounts, when I am not told the length of the common peek to which he refers the rest, as being  $1\frac{1}{2}$  digit, or 2 digits more or less. He himself thinks that the measuring peek is the Stambouline peek, but then, for computation's sake, he takes a peek of his own invention, being a medium of 4 or 5 guesses, and fixes it at 25 inches, for which he has no authority but his own imagination,

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\* Shaw, p. 380. 381,

I WILL not perplex the reader more with the different measures of these peeks, between the Hafamean and great peek of Kalkafendas, which is 18 inches, and the black peek, a model of which Dr Bernard\* has given us from an Arabic MS. at Oxford, the difference is 10 inches. The first being 18 inches equal to the Samian peek, the other  $28\frac{1}{2}$  inches, and from this difference we may judge, joined to the uncertainties of the height and divisions of the Mikeas, how impossible it is for us to determine the increase of 12 inches in a hundred years.

As the generality of writers have fixed upon the Constantinople, or Stambouline peek, for the measure of the Mikeas, in which choice they have erred, we will next seek what is the measure of the Stambouline peek, and whether they have in this article been better informed.

M. DE MAILLET, French consul at Cairo, says, that this peek is equal to 2 French feet, or very nearly 26 inches of our measure: and, to add to this another mistake, he states, that by this peek the Mikeas is measured; and, for the completing of the confusion, he adds, that the Nile must rise 48 French feet before it covers *all their lands*. What he means by all their lands is to very little purpose to inquire, for he would probably have been drowned in his closet in which he made these computations, long before he had seen the Nile at that height, or near it.

WITHOUT, then, wandering longer in this extraordinary confusion, which I have only stated to shew that a traveller

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\* Descript. de l'Egypte, p. 60.

may differ from Dr Shaw, and yet be right, and that this writer, however learned he may be, cannot, for want of information, be competent to solve this question which he so much insists upon, I shall now, with great submission to the judgment of my reader, endeavour to explain, in as few words as possible, how the real state of the matter stands, and he will then apply it as he pleases.

THERE was a very ingenious gentleman whom I met with at Cairo, M. Antes, a German by birth, and of the Moravian persuasion, who, both to open to himself more freely the opportunities of propagating his religious tenets, and to gratify his own mechanical turn, rather than from a view of gain, to which all his society are (as he was) perfectly indifferent, exercised the trade of watch-maker at Cairo. This very worthy and sagacious young man was often my unwearied and useful partner in many inquiries and trials, as to the manner of executing some instruments in the most compendious form for experiments proposed to be made in my travels. By his assistance, I formed a rod of brass, of half an inch square, and of a thickness which did not easily warp, and would not alter its dimensions unless with a violent heat. Upon the three faces of this brazen rod we traced, with good glasses and dividers, the measure of three different peeks, then the only three known in Cairo, the exact length of which was taken from the standard model furnished me by the Cadi. The first was the Stambouline, or Constantinople peek, exactly  $23\frac{1}{2}$  inches; the second, the Hendaizy, of  $24\frac{7}{8}$  inches; and the third the peek El Belledy, of 22 inches, all English measure.



It was natural to suppose, that, after knowing, as we do, that no alteration has been made in the Mikeas since the 245th year of the Hegira, that the peek of Constantinople, a foreign measure, was probably then not known, nor introduced into Egypt; nor, till after the conquest of Sultan Selim, in the year 1516, was it likely to be the peek with which the Mikeas was measured. It did not, as I conceive, exist in the 245th of the Hegira, though, even if it had, its dimensions may have been widely different from those fixed upon by the number of writers whose authority we have quoted, but who do not agree. It was not likely to be the Hendaizy peek either, for this, too, was a foreign measure, originally from the island of Meroë, and well known to the Egyptians in Upper Egypt, but not at all to the Saracens their present masters. The peek, El Belledy, the measure in common use, and known to all the Egyptians, was the proper cubit to be employed in an operation which concerned a whole nation, and was, therefore, the measure made use of in the division of the Mikeas, for that column, as I have said, is divided equally into peeks, or draas, called *Draa El Belledy*, consisting of 22 inches; and each of these peeks is again divided into 24 digits.

A VERY ingenious author, who treats of the particular circumstances of those times, in his MS. called *Han el Mobaderat*, says, that the inhabitants of Seide counted 24 peeks on their Nilometer, when there were 18 peeks marked as the rise of the water upon the Mikeas at Rhoda; and this shews perfectly two things: First, That they knew the whole secret of counting there both by the marked and unmarked part of the column; for the peek of the Mikeas being 22 inches English, it was, by consequence, four inches larger each.

each peek than the Samian peek ; so that if, to 20 peeks of Seide, you add twenty times four inches, which is 80, the difference of the two peeks, when divided by 18, gives four, which, added to the 20 peeks on the column, make 24 peeks, the number sought. Secondly, That this observation in the Han el Mohaderat sufficiently confirms what I have said both of the length of the column and length of the peek ; that the former is 20 peeks in height, and that the measure, by which this is ascertained, is the peek El Belledy of 22 inches, as it appears on the brass rod, four inches longer than the Samian peek, and consequently is not the peek of Stambouline, nor any foreign measure whatever.

A TRAVELLER thinks he has attained to a great deal of precision, when, observing 18 peeks on the highest division of the column from its base, or bottom of the well, he finds it 37 feet ; he divides this by 18, and the quotient is 24 inches ; when he should divide it by 20, and the answer would be 22 and a fraction, the true content of the peek El Belledy, or peek of the Mikeas. This erroneous division of his he calls the peek of the Mikeas ; and comparing it with what authors, less informed than himself, have said, he names the Stambouline peek, and then the black peek, when it really is his own peek, the creature of his own error or inadvertence ; but, as he does not know this, it is handed down from traveller to traveller, till unfortunately it is adopted by some man of reputation, and it then becomes, as in this case, a sort of literary crime to any man, from the authority of his own eyes and hands, to dispute it.

MR POCOCKE makes two very curious and sensible remarks in point of fact, but of which he does not know the reason. "The Nile, he says, in the beginning, turns red, and sometimes green; then the waters are unwholesome. He supposes that the source of the Nile beginning to flow plentifully, the waters at first bring away that green or red filth which may be about the lakes at its rise, or at the rise of these small rivers that flow into it, near its principal source; for, though there is so little water in the Nile, when at lowest, that there is hardly any current in many parts of it, yet it cannot be supposed that the water should stagnate in the bed of the Nile, so as to become green. Afterwards the water becomes very red and still more turbid, and then it begins to be wholesome \*."

THE true reason of this appearance is from those immense marshes spread over the country about Narea and Caffa, where there is little level, and where the water accumulates, and is stagnant, before it overflows into the river Abiad, which rises there. The overflowing of these immense marshes carry first that discoloured water into Egypt, then follows, in Abyssinia, the overflowing of the great lake Tzana, through which the Nile passes, which, having been stagnated and without rain for six months, under a scorching sun, joins its putrid waters with the first. There are, moreover, very few rivers in Abyssinia that run after November, as they stand in prodigious pools below, in the country of the Shangalla, and afford drink for the elephant, and habitation and food for the hippopotamus. These pools likewise throw off their stagnant water into the Nile on receiving the first rains;

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\* Pococke, vol. i. p. 199. 200.

at last the rivers, marshes, and lakes, being refreshed by showers, (the rain becoming constant) and passing through the kingdom of Sennaar, the soil of which is a red bole; This mixture, and the moving sands of the deserts, fall into the current, and precipitate all the viscous and putrid substances, which cohere and float in the river; and thence (as Pococke has well observed) the sign of the Nile being wholesome, is not when it is clear and green, but when mingled with fresh water, and after precipitation it becomes red and turbid, and stains the water of the Mediterranean.

THE next remark of Mr Pococke \* is equally true. It has been observed, says he, that after the rainy season is over, the Nile fallen, and the whole country drained from inundation, it has begun again to rise; and he gives an instance of that in December 1737, when it had a sudden increase, which alarmed all Egypt, where the received opinion was that it presaged calamities. This also is said to have happened in the time of Cleopatra, when their government was subverted, their ancient race of kings extinguished in the person of that princess, and Egypt became a province to the Romans.

THE reader will not expect, in these enlightened times, that I should use arguments to convince him, that this rising of the Nile had nothing to do with the extinction of the race of the Ptolemies, though popular preachers and prophets have always made use of these fortuitous events to confirm the vulgar in their prejudices.

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\* Pococke, vol. i. p. 201.

THE rains, that cease in Abyssinia about the 8th of September, leave generally a sickly season in the low country; but other rains begin towards the end of October, in the last days of the Ethiopic month Tekemt, which continue moderately about three weeks, and end the 8th of November, or the 12th of the Ethiopic month Hedar. All sickness and epidemical diseases then disappear, and the 8th of that month is the feast of St Michael, the day the king marches, and his army begins their campaign; but the effect of these second rains seldom make any, or a very short appearance in Egypt, all the canals being open. But these are the rains upon which depend their latter crops, and for which the Agows, at the source of the Nile, pray to the river, or to the genius residing in the river. We had plentiful showers both in going and coming to that province, especially in our journey out. Whenever these rains prove excessive, as in some particular years it seems they do, though but very rarely, the land-floods, and those from the marshes, falling upon the ground, already much hardened and broken into chafms, by two months intense heat of the sun, run violently into the Nile without sinking into the earth. The consequence is this temporary rising of the Nile in December, which is as unconnected with the good and bad crops of Egypt, as it is on those of Palestine or Syria.

THE quantity of rain that falls in Ethiopia varies greatly from year to year, as do the months in which it falls. The quantity that fell, during 1770, in Gondar, between the vernal equinox and the 8th of September, through a funnel of one foot English in diameter, was 35.555 inches; and, in

1771, the quantity that fell in the same circumference was 41.355 inches in the same space \*.

IN 1770, August was the rainy month; in 1771 July. Both these years the people paid the meery, and the *Wafaa Ullab* was in August. When July is the rainy month, the rains generally cease for some days in the beginning of August, and then a prodigious deal falls in the latter end of that month and the first week of September. In other years, July and August are the violent rainy months, whilst June is fair. And lastly, in others, May, June, July, August and the first week of September. Now we shall suppose (which is the most common case of all) that every month from June doubles its rain. The *Wafaa Ullab* generally takes place about the 9th of August, the tribute being then due, and all attention to the Mikeas is abandoned at 14 real peeks, the Calish is then cut, and the water let down to the Delta.

Now these 14 peeks are not a proof how much water there is to overflow the land; for supposing nine days for its passage from Ethiopia, then the 9th of August receives at Cairo no later rains than those that have fallen the 1st of August in Ethiopia, and from that date till the 17th of September, the Nile increases one third of its whole inundation, which is never suffered to appear on the Mikeas, but is turned down to the lakes in the Delta, as I suppose it always has been; so that the quantity of water which falls in Ethiopia hath never yet been ascertained, and never can be by the Mikeas, nor can it ever be known what quantity  
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\* See Table, or Register of Rain, that fell in these years, inserted at the end of this volume.

of water comes in to Egypt, or what quantity of ground it is sufficient to overflow, unless the dykes were to be kept close till the Nile attained its extreme height, which would be about the 25th of September, long before which it would be over the banks and mounds, if they held in till then, or have swept Cairo and all the Delta into the Mediterranean, and if it should not do that, it would retire so late from the fields as to leave the ground in no condition to be sown that year.

I do not comprehend what idea other travellers have formed of the beginning of the inundation of the Nile, as they seem to admit that the banks are not overflowed; and this is certainly the case; because the cities and villages are built there as securely as on the highest part of Egypt, and even when the Nile has risen to its greatest height they still are obliged to water those spots with machines. In another part of the work it is explained how the calishes carry the water upon the lands, approaching always to the banks as the river rises in proportion, and these calishes being derived from the Nile at right angles with the stream, and carrying the water by the inclination of the ground, in a direction different from the course of the river, the water is perfectly stagnated at the foot of the hills, till accumulated as the stream rises, it moves in a contrary direction backwards again, and approaches its banks. But when the inundation is so great that the back-water comes in contact with the current of the Nile, by known laws it must partake the same motion with it, and so all Egypt become one torrent.

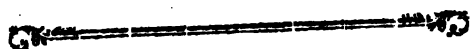
DR SHAW, indeed \*, says, that there seems to be a descent from the banks to the foot of the mountains, but this he considers as an optic fallacy; I wish he had told us upon what principle of optics; but if it was really so, how comes it that the banks are every year dry, when the foot of the mountains is at same time under inundation; or, in other words, what is the reason of that undisputed fact, that the foot of the mountains is laid under water in the beginning of the rivers rising, while the ground which they cultivate by labour near the banks, cannot supply itself from the river by machines, till near the height of the inundation? these facts will not be contraverted by any traveller, who has ever been in Upper Egypt; but if this had been admitted as truth instead of an optic fallacy, this question would have immediately followed. If the land of Egypt at the foot of the mountains, is the lowest, the first overflowed, and the longest covered with water, and often the only part overflowed at all, whence can it arise that it is not upon a level with the banks of the river if it is true that the land of Egypt receives additional height every year by the mud from Abyssinia deposited by the stream? and this question would not have been so easily answered.

THE Nile for these thirty years has but once so failed as to occasion dearth, but never in that period so as to produce famine in Egypt. The redundance of the water sweeping every thing before it, has thrice been the cause, not of dearth, but of famine and emigration; but carelessness, I believe,



believe, hath been, the occasion of both, and very often the malice of the Arabs; for there are in Egypt, from Siout downwards, great remains of ancient works, vast lakes, canals, and large conduits for water, destined by the ancients to keep this river under controul, serving as reservoirs to supply a scanty year, and as drains, or outlets, to prevent the over abundance of water in wet years, by spreading it in the thirsty sands of Libya to the great advantage of the Arabs, rather than letting it run to waste in the Mediterranean. The mouths of these immense drains being out of repair, in a scanty year, contribute by their evacuation to make it still scantier by not retaining water, and if after a dearth they are well secured, or raised too high, and a wet season follows, they then occasion a destructive inundation.

I HOPE I have now satisfied the reader, that Egypt was never an arm of the sea, or formed by sediments brought down in the Nile, but that it was created with other parts of the globe at the same time, and for the same purposes; and we are warranted to say this, till we receive from the hand of Providence a work of such imperfection, that its destruction can be calculated from the very means by which it was first formed, and which were the apparent sources of its beauty and pre-eminence. Egypt, like other countries, will perish by the fiat of Him that made it, but when, or in what manner, lies hid where it ought to be, inaccessible to the useless, vain inquiries, and idle speculations of man.



## C H A P. XVIII.

*Inquiry about the Possibility of changing the Course of the Nile—Cause of the Nufia.*

**I**T has been thought a problem that merited to be considered, Whether it was possible to turn the current of the Nile into the Red Sea, and thereby to furnish Egypt? I think the question should more properly be, Whether the water of the Nile, running into Egypt, could be so diminished, or diverted, that it should never be sufficient to prepare that country for annual cultivation? Now to this it is answered, That there seems to be no doubt but that it is possible, because the Nile, and all the rivers that run into it, and all the rains that swell those rivers, fall in a country fully two miles above the level of the sea; therefore, it cannot be denied, that there is level enough to divert many of the rivers into the Red Sea, the Indian, and Atlantic Oceans, or, perhaps, still easier, by turning the course of the river Abiad till it meets the level of the Niger, or pass through the desert into the Mediterranean.

LALIBALA, as we have already seen, attempted the former method with great appearance of success; and this prince, to whom the accidental circumstances of the time had given extraordinary powers, and who was otherwise a man of great capacity and resolution, might, if he had persevered, completed his purpose, the thing being possible, that is, no law of nature against it, and all difficulties are only relative to the powers vested in those who are engaged in the undertaking. Alexander the Great would have succeeded—his father Philip would have miscarried—Lewis the XIV. would perhaps have accomplished it, as easily as he united the two seas by the canal of Languedoc, and with the same engineers; but he is the only European prince of whom this could have been expected with any degree of probability.

ALPHONSO ALBUQUERQUE, viceroy of India, is said to have wrote frequently to the king of Portugal, Don Emanuel, to send him some pioneers from Madeira, people accustomed to level ground, and prepare it for sugar-canes, with whose assistance he was to execute that enterprize of turning the Nile into the Red Sea, and furnishing Egypt. His son mentions this very improbable story in his \* father's commentaries; and he says further, that he imagines it might have been done, because it was a known fact that the Arabs in Upper Egypt, when in rebellion against the Soldan, used to interrupt the course of the canal between Cossair on the Red Sea, and Kenna in Egypt.

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\* Alph. d'Albuquerque, Comment. lib. iv. cap. 7.

TEBBEZ and le Grande, mentioning the two opinions of the father and the son upon this subject, give great praise to the son at the expence of the father, but without reason.

IN the first place, we have seen that the utmost exertion Don Emanuel could make was to send 400 men to assist the king of Abyssinia, whose country was then almost conquered by the Turks and Moors. It was not then from India we were to expect the execution of so arduous an undertaking. And as to the second, the younger Albuquerque is mistaken egregiously in point of fact, for there never was a canal between Cossair and Kenna, the goods from the Red Sea were transported by a caravan, and are so yet. We have seen, in the beginning of this work, the account of my travelling thither from Kenna; this intercourse probably was often interrupted by the Arabs in the days he mentions, and so it is still; but it is the caravan, not the canal, that is stopp'd by the Arabs, for no canal ever existed.

THE sum of all this story is, a long and violent persecution followed the conquest of Egypt by the Saracens, who were accustomed to live in tents, which, with their dislike to the Christian churches, made them destroy all the buildings of stone, as also persecute the masons, whom they considered as being employed in the advancement of idolatry: these unhappy workmen, therefore, fled in numbers to Lalibala, an Abyssinian prince of their own religion, who employed them in many stupendous works for diverting the Nile into the Red Sea, or the Indian Ocean, which I have already described, and which exist entire to this day\*.

THIS

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\* Vol. I. b. ii. chap. 8.

THIS idea, indeed, had subsisted as long as the royal family lived in the south part of Abyssinia, in Shoa, in the neighbourhood, and sometimes on the very spot where the attempt was made. When the court, however, removed northward, and the princes, no longer confined in Gessen, (a mountain in Amhara) were imprisoned, as they now are, in Wechné, in Belessen, near Gondar, these transactions of remote times and places were gradually forgot, and often misrepresented; though, so far down as the beginning of this century, we find Tecla Haimanout I. \* (king of Abyssinia) expostulating by a letter with the basha of Cairo upon the murder of the French envoy M. du Roule, and threatening the Turkish regency, that, if they persisted in such misbehaviour, he would make the Nile the instrument of his vengeance, the keys of which were in his hand, to give them famine or plenty, as they should deserve of him. In my time, no sensible man in Abyssinia believed that such a thing was possible, and few that it had ever been attempted.

As for the opinion of those, that the Nile may be turned into the Red Sea from Nubia or Egypt, it deserves no answer. What could be the motive of such an undertaking? Would the Egyptians suffer such an operation to be carried on in their own country for the sake of starving themselves? and if the country had been taken from them by an enemy, still it could not be the interest of that conqueror to let the inhabitants, now become his subjects, perish, and much less to reduce them to the necessity of so doing by such an undertaking.

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\* See this letter in the life of that prince.

MUCH has been wrote about a miraculous drop, or dew, called Gotta, or Nufta, which falls in Egypt precisely on St John's day, and is believed to be the peculiar gift of that faint; it stops the plague, causes dough to leaven, or ferment, and announces a speedy and plentiful inundation.

I HOPE my reader will not expect that I should enter into the discussion of the part St John is thought to have in this event, my business is only with natural causes.

MEMPHIS and Alexandria, and all the ancient cities of Lower Egypt, stand upon cisterns, into which the Nile, upon its overflowing, was admitted, and there remained till it had deposited all its sediment, and became fit for drinking. These cisterns are now full of filth; though in disrepair, the water, when the Nile is high insinuates itself into them through the broken conduits.

IN February and March the sun is on its approach to the zenith of one extremity of Egypt, and of course has a very considerable influence upon the other. The Nile being now fallen low, the water in the cisterns putrifies, and the river itself has lost all its volatile and finer parts by the continued action of a vertical sun; so that, instead of being subject to evaporation, it becomes daily more and more inclined to putrefaction. About St John's day \* it receives a plentiful mixture of the fresh and fallen rain from Ethiopia, which dilutes and refreshes the almost corrupted river, and the sun  
near

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\* In Abyssinia, the 24th June.

near at hand exerts its natural influence upon the water, which now is become light enough to be exhaled, though it has still with it a mixture of the corrupted fluid, so that it rises but a small height during the first few days of the inundation, then falls down and returns to the earth in plentiful and abundant dews; and that this is really so, I am persuaded from what I observed myself at Cairo.

My quadrant was placed on the flat roof, or terrass, of a gentleman's house where I was taking observations; I had gone down to supper, and soon after returned, when I found the brass limb of the quadrant covered with small drops of dew, which were turned to a perfect green, or copperas colour; and this green had so corroded the brass in an hour's time, that the marks remained on the limb of the quadrant for six months; and the cavities made by the corrosion were plainly discernible through a microscope.

It is in February, March, or April only, that the plague begins in Egypt. I do not believe it an endemial disease, I rather think it comes from Constantinople with merchandise, or passengers, and at this time of the year that the air having attained a degree of putridity proper to receive it by the long absence of dews, the infection is thereto joined, and continues to rage till the period I just spoke of, when it is suddenly stopped by the dews occasioned by a refreshing mixture of rain-water, which is poured out into the Nile at the beginning of the inundation.

THE first and most remarkable sign of the change brought about in the air is the sudden stopping of the plague at Saint.

Saint John's day; every person, though shut up from society for months before, buys, sells, and communicates with his neighbour without any sort of apprehension; and it was never known, as far as I could learn upon fair inquiry, that one fell sick of the plague after this anniversary: it will be observed I don't say *died*; there are, I know, examples of that, though I believe but few; the plague is not always a disease that suddenly terminates, it often takes a considerable time to come to a head, appearing only by symptoms; so that people taken ill, under the most putrid influence of the air, linger on, struggling with the disease which has already got such hold that they cannot recover; but what I say, and mean is, that no person is taken ill of the plague so as to die after the dew has fallen in June; and no symptoms of the plague are ever commonly seen in Egypt but in those spring months already mentioned, the greater part of which are totally destitute of moisture.

I THINK the instance I am going to give, which is universally known, and cannot be denied, brings this so home that no doubt can remain of the origin of this dew, and its powerful effects upon the plague.

THE Turks and Moors are known to be predestinarians; they believe the hour of man's death is so immutably fixed that nothing can either advance or defer it an instant. Secure in this principle, they expose in the market-place, immediately after Saint John's day, the clothes of the many thousands that have died during the late continuance of the plague, all which imbibe the moist air of the evening and the morning, are handled, bought, put on, and worn without any apprehension of danger; and though these

consist



consist of furs, cotton, silk, and woollen cloths, which are stuffs the most retentive of the infection, no accident happens to those who wear them from this their happy confidence.

I SHALL here sum up all that I have to say relating to the river Nile, with a tradition handed down to us by Herodotus, the father of ancient history, upon which moderns less instructed have grafted a number of errors. Herodotus \* says, that he was informed by the secretary of Minerva's treasury, that one half of the water of the Nile flowed due north into Egypt, while the other half took an opposite course, and flowed directly south into Ethiopia.

THE secretary was probably of that country himself, and seems by his observation to have known more of it than all the ancients together. In fact, we have seen that, between  $13^{\circ}$  and  $14^{\circ}$  N. latitude, the Nile, with all its tributary streams, which have their rise and course within the tropical rains, falls down into the flat country, (the kingdom of Sennar), which is more than a mile lower than the high country in Abyssinia, and thence, with a little inclination, it runs into Egypt.

AGAIN, in lat.  $9^{\circ}$  in the kingdom of Gingero, the Zebé runs south, or south-east, into the inner Ethiopia, as do also many other rivers, and, as I have heard from the natives of that country, empty themselves into a lake, as those on the north of the Line do into the lake Tzana; thence distribute their

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\* Herod. lib. ii. p. 98. sect. 28.

their waters to the east and to the west. These become the heads of great rivers that run through the interior countries of Ethiopia (corresponding to the sea-coast of Melinda and Mombaza) into the Indian Ocean, whilst, on the westward, they are the origin of the vast streams that fall into the Atlantic, passing through Benin and Congo, southward of the river Gambea, and the Sierraleona.

IN short, the periodical rains from the tropic of Capricorn to the Line, being in equal quantity with those that fall between the Line and the tropic of Cancer, it is plain, that if the land of Ethiopia sloped equally from the Line southward and northward, half of the rains that fall on each side would go north, and half south, but as the ground from 5° N. declines all southward, it follows that the river which runs to the southward must be equal to those that run to the northward, *plus* the rain that falls in the 5° north latitude, where the ground begins to slope to the southward, and there can be little doubt this is at least one of the reasons why there are in the southern continent so many rivers larger than the Nile that run both into the Indian and Atlantic Oceans.

FROM this very true and sensible relation handed to us by Herodotus, from the authority of the secretary of Minerva, the Nubian geographer has framed a fiction of his own, which is, that the river Nile divides itself into two branches, one of which runs into Egypt northward, and one through the country of the negroes westward, into the Atlantic Ocean. And this opinion has been greedily adopted by M. Ludolf\*,  
who

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\* Vid. Ludolf in Proœnio Histor. Æthiop. 1. 8. 1c. lib. i. cap. viii. p. 178. Leo Africanus in descrip. Africa, lib. i. cap. vii.

who cites the authority of Leo Africanus, and that of his monk Gregory, both of them, in these respects, fully as much mistaken as the Nubian geographer himself. M. Ludolf, after quoting a passage of Pliny, tells us that he had consulted the famous Bochart upon that subject, whether the Nile and the Niger (the river that runs through Nigritia into the Western Ocean) were one and the same river? The famous Bochart answers him peremptorily in the true spirit of a schoolman,—That there is nothing more certain than that the Niger is a part of the river Nile. With great submission, however, I must venture to say there is not the least foundation for this assertion.

PLINY seems the first who gave rise to it, but he speaks modestly upon the subject, giving his reasons as he goes along. “*Nigri fluvio eadem natura, quæ Nilo, calamum & papyrus, & eadem gignit animantes, iidemque temporibus augetur.*”<sup>\*</sup> That it has the same soil from which the Nile takes its colour, the water is the same in taste, produces the same reeds, and especially the papyrus; has the same animals in it, such as the crocodile and hippopotamus, and overflows at the same season; this is saying nothing but what may be applied with equal truth to every other river between the northern tropic and the Line; but the other two authors, the Nubian and the monk, assert each of them a direct falsehood. The Nubian says, that if the Nile carried all the rains that fall in Abyssinia down into Egypt, the people would not be safe in their houses. To this I answer by a matter of fact, the map of the whole

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<sup>\*</sup> Plin. lib. v. cap. 8.

course of the Nile is before the reader ; and it is plain from thence, that the whole rain in Abyssinia must now go, and ever has gone down into Egypt, and yet the people are very safe in their houses, and very seldom is the whole land of Egypt compleatly overflowed : and it is by no means less certain from the same inspection, that, unless a river as large as the Nile, constantly full, having its rise in countries subject to perpetual rains, and pouring its stream, which never decreases, into that river, as the Abiad does at Halfaia, all the waters in Abyssinia collected in the Nile would not be sufficient to pass its scanty stream through the burning deserts of Nubia and the Barabra, so as it should be of any utility when arrived in Egypt.

THE next falsehood in point of fact is that of the monk Gregory, who says that this left branch of the Nile parts from it, after having passed the kingdom of Dongola into Nubia, after which it runs through Elvah, and so down the desert into the Mediterranean, between the Cyrenaicum and Alexandria. Now, first, we know, from the authority of all antiquity, that there is not a desert more destitute of rivers than that of the Thebaid. This want of water (not the distance) made the voyage to the temple of Jupiter Ammon an enterprize next to desperate, and so worthy of Alexander, who never, however, met a river in his way ; had there been there such a stream, there could be no doubt that the banks of it would have been fully as well inhabited as those of the Nile, and the Thebaid consequently no desert. Besides the caravans, which for  
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ages passed between Egypt and Sennaar, must have seen this river, and drunk of it; so must the travellers, in the beginning of this century, Poncet and M. du Roule. They were both at Elvah; and, passing through the dreary deserts of Selima, they must have gone along its side, and crossed it, where it parted from the Nile in their journey to Sennaar. Whereas we know they never saw running water from the time they left the Nile at Siout in Egypt, till they fell in again with it at Moscho, during which period they had nothing but well water, which they carried in skins with them.

THE district of Elvah is the Oasis Magna and Oasis Parva of the ancients; large plentiful springs breaking out in the middle of the burning sands, and running constantly without diminution, have invited inhabitants to flock around them. These conducting off the water that spills over the fountain by trenches, the neighbouring lands have quickly produced a plentiful vegetation: gardens and verdure are spread on every side, large groves of palm tree have been planted, and the overflowings of every fountain have produced a little paradise, like so many beautiful and fruitful islands amidst an immense ocean.

THE coast of the Mediterranean, from the Cyrenaicum or Ptolemaid (that is, the coast from Bengazi, or Derna, to Alexandria) is well known by the shipping of every nation; but what pilot or passenger ever saw this magnificent watering-place in that desert coast, where this branch of the Nile comes down into the Mediterranean? Besides, the author of this fable betrays his ignorance in the very begin-

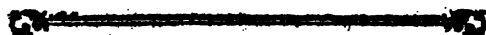
ning, where he derives this left branch of the Nile from the principal river, and says, that, after passing the kingdom of Dongola, it enters Nubia. Now, when it entered Dongola it must have already passed Nubia, for Dongola is the capital of the Barabra, every inch of which is to the northward of Nubia. I do not know worse guides in the geography of Africa than Leo Africanus and the Nubian geographer. I believe them both impostors, and the commentators upon them have greatly increased by their own conjectures, the confusion and errors which the text has everywhere occasioned.

As far as I have been ever able to learn, by a very diligent and cautious inquiry, from the inhabitants of the neighbouring countries, I believe the origin of the Niger is in lat.  $12^{\circ}$  north, and in long.  $30^{\circ}$  from the meridian of Greenwich nearly; that it is composed of various rivers falling down the sides of very high mountains, called Dyre and Tegla; and runs straight west into the heart of Africa. I conclude also, that this river (though it has abundant supply from every mountain) is very much diminished by evaporation, running in a long course upon the very limits of the tropical rains, when entire, under the name of Senega; or, perhaps, when divided under those of Senega and Gambia, it loses itself in the Atlantic Ocean. I conceive also, that, as Pliny says, it has the same taste and natural productions with the Nile, because it runs in the same climate, and like that river owes, if not its existence, yet certainly its increase and fullness to the same cause, the tropical rains in the northern hemisphere falling from high mountains.

I HOPE I have now fully exhausted every subject worthy of inquiry as to the place where the fountains of the Nile are situated, also as to its course and various names, the different countries through which it flows, the true cause, and every thing curious attending its inundations; and that as, in old times, *Caput Nili Quærere*, *to seek the source of the Nile*, was a proverb in use to signify the impossibility of an attempt, it may hereafter be applied, with as much reason, to denote the inutility of any such undertakings.



CHAP.



## C H A P. XIX.

*Kind reception among the Agows—Their Number, Trade, Character, &c.*

AFTER having given my reader so long, though, I hope, no unentertaining lecture, it is time to go back to Woldo, whom we had left settling our reception with the chief of the village of Geesh. We found the measures taken by this man such as convinced us at once of his capacity and attachment. The miserable Agows, assembled all around him, were too much interested in the appearance we made, not to be exceedingly inquisitive how long our stay was to be among them. They saw, by the horse driven before us, we belonged to Fasil, and suspected, for the same reason, that they were to maintain us, or, in other words, that we should live at discretion upon them as long as we chose to tarry there; but Woldo, with great address, had dispelled these fears almost as soon as they were formed.



He informed them of the king's grant to me of the village of Geesh; that Fasil's tyranny and avarice would end that day, and another master, like Negadé Ras Georgis, was come to pass a chearful time among them, with a resolution to pay for every labour they were ordered to perform, and purchase all things for ready money: he added, moreover, that no military service was further to be exacted from them, either by the king or governor of Damot, nor from their present master, as he had no enemies. We found these news had circulated with great rapidity, and we met with a hearty welcome upon our arrival at the village.

Woldo had asked a house from the Shum, who very civilly had granted me his own; it was just large enough to serve me, but we were obliged to take possession of four or five others, and we were scarcely settled in these when a servant arrived from Fasil to intimate to the Shum his surrendry of the property and sovereignty of Geesh to me, in consequence of a grant from the king: he brought with him a fine, large, milk-white cow, two sheep, and two goats; the sheep and goats I understood were from Welleta-Yafous. Fasil also sent us six jars of hydromel, fifty wheat loaves of very excellent bread, and to this Welleta-Yafous had added two middle-sized horns of excellent strong spirits. Our hearts were now perfectly at ease, and we passed a very merry evening. Strates, above all, endeavoured, with many a bumper of the good hydromel of Buré, to subdue the devil which he had swallowed in the enchanted water. Woldo, who had done his part to great perfection, and had reconciled the minds of all the people of the village to us, had a little apprehension for himself; he thought he had lost credit with me, and therefore employed the servant of

Ayto Aylo to desire me not to speak of the fash to Fasil's servant. I assured him, that, as long as I saw him acting properly, as he now did, it was much more probable I should give him another fash on our return, than complain of the means he had used to get this last. This entirely removed all his fears, and indeed as long after as he was with us, he every day deserved more and more our commendations.

BEFORE we went to bed I satisfied Fasil's servant, who had orders from Welleta Yafous to return immediately; and, as he saw we did not spare the liquor that he brought us, he promised to send a fresh supply as soon as he returned home, which he did not fail to perform the day after.

WOLDO was now perfectly happy; he had no superior or spy over his actions; he had explained himself to the Shum, that we should want somebody to buy necessaries to make bread for us, and to take care of the management of our house. We displayed our lesser articles for barter to the Shum, and told him the most considerable purchases, such as oxen and sheep, were to be paid in gold. He was struck with the appearance of our wealth, and the generosity of our proposals, and told Woldo that he insisted, since we were in his houses, we would take his daughters for our house-keepers. The proposal was a most reasonable one, and readily accepted. He accordingly sent for three in an instant, and we delivered them their charge. The eldest took it upon her readily, she was about sixteen years of age, of a stature above the middle size, but she was remarkably genteel, and, colour apart, her features would have made her a beauty in any country in Europe; she was, besides, very sprightly; we understood not one word of her language,

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language, though she comprehended very easily the signs that we made. This nymph of the Nile was called by nickname Irepone, which signifies some animal that destroys mice, but whether of the ferret or snake kind I could not perfectly understand; sometimes it was one and sometimes another, but which it was I thought of no great importance.

THE first and second day, after disposing of some of our stock in purchases, she thought herself obliged to render us an account, and give back the residue at night to Woldo, with a protestation that she had not stolen or kept any thing to herself. I looked upon this regular accounting as an ungenerous treatment of our benefactress. I called on Woldo, and made him produce a parcel that contained the same with the first commodities we had given her; this consisted of beads, antimony, small scissars, knives, and large needles; I then brought out a packet of the same that had not been broken, and told her they were intended to be distributed among her friends, and that we expected no account from her; on the contrary, that, after she had bestowed these, to buy us necessaries, and for any purposes she pleased, I had still as many more to leave her at parting, for the trouble she had given herself. I often thought the head of the little savage would have turned with the possession of so much riches, and so great confidence, and it was impossible to be so blinded, as not to see that I had already made great progress in her affections. To the number of trifles I had added one ounce of gold, value about fifty shillings sterling, which I thought would defray our expences all the time we staid; and having now perfectly arranged

the œconomy of our family, nothing remained but to make the proper observations.

THE houses are all of clay and straw. There was no place for fixing my clock; I was therefore obliged to employ a very excellent watch made for me by Elicott. The dawn now began, and a few minutes afterwards everybody was at their doors; all of them crowded to see us, and we breakfasted in public with very great cheerfulness. The white cow was killed, and every one invited to his share of her. The Shum, priest of the river, should likewise have been of the party, but he declined either sitting or eating with us, though his sons were not so scrupulous.

It is upon the principal fountain and altar, already mentioned, that once a-year, on the first appearance of the dog-star, (or, as others say, eleven days after) this priest assembles the heads of the clans; and having sacrificed a black heifer that never bore a calf, they plunge the head of it into this fountain, they then wrap it up in its own hide, so as no more to be seen, after having sprinkled the hide within and without with water from the fountain. The carcase is then split in half, and cleaned with extraordinary care; and, thus prepared, it is laid upon the hillock over the first fountain, and washed all over with its water, while the elders, or considerable people, carry water in their hands joined (it must not be in any dish) from the two other fountains; they then assemble upon the small hill a little west of St Michael, (it used to be the place where the church now stands) there they divide the carcase into pieces corresponding to the number of the tribes, and each tribe has its privilege, or pretensions, to particular parts, which  
are

are not in proportion to the present consequence of the several clans. Geesh has a principal slice, though the most inconsiderable territory of the whole; Sacala has the next; and Zeegam, the most considerable of them all in power and riches, has the least of the whole. I found it in vain to ask upon what rules this distribution was founded; their general and constant answer was, It was so observed in old times.

AFTER having ate this carcase raw, according to their custom, and drunk the Nile water to the exclusion of any other liquor, they pile up the bones on the place where they sit, and burn them to ashes. This used to be performed where the church now stands; but Ras Sela Chrillos, some time after, having beaten the Agows, and desirous, at the Jesuits instigation, to convert them to Christianity, he demolished their altar where the bones were burnt, and built a church upon the site, the doors of which, I believe, were never opened since that reign, nor is there now, as far as we could perceive, any Christian there who might wish to see it frequented. After Sela Chrillos had demolished their altar by building this church, they ate the carcase, and burnt the bones, on the top of the mountain of Geesh out of the way of profanation, where the vestiges of this ceremony may yet be seen; but probably the fatigue attending this, and the great indifference their late governors have had for Christianity, have brought them back to a small hillock by the side of the marsh, west of saint Michael's church, and a little to the southward, where they perform this solemnity every year, and they will probably resume their first altar when the church is fallen to ruins, which they are every day privately hastening.

AFTER they have finished their bloody banquet, they carry the head, close wrapt from sight in the hide, into the cavern, which they say reaches below the fountains, and there, by a common light, without torches, or a number of candles, as denoting a solemnity, they perform their worship, the particulars of which I never could learn; it is a piece of free-masonry, which every body knows, and no body ventures to reveal. At a certain time of the night they leave the cave, but at what time, or by what rule, I could not learn; neither would they tell me what became of the head, whether it was ate, or buried, or how consumed. The Abyssinians have a story, probably created by themselves, that the devil appears to them, and with him they eat the head, swearing obedience to him upon certain conditions, that of sending rain, and a good season for their bees and cattle: however this may be, it is certain that they pray to the spirit residing in the river, whom they call the Everlasting God, Light of the World, Eye of the World, God of Peace, their Saviour, and Father of the Universe.

OUR landlord, the Shum, made no scruple of reciting his prayers for seasonable rain, for plenty of grass, for the preservation of serpents, at least of one kind of this reptile; he also deprecated thunder in these prayers, which he pronounced very pathetically with a kind of tone or song; he called the river "Most High God, Saviour of the World;" of the other words I could not well judge, but by the interpretation of Woldo. Those titles, however, of divinity which he gave the river, I could perfectly comprehend without an interpreter, and for these only I am a voucher.

I ASKED the priest, into whose good graces I had purpose-ly insinuated myself, if ever any spirit had been seen by him? He answered, without hesitation, Yes; very frequently. He said he had seen the spirit the evening of the 3d, (just as the sun was setting) under a tree, which he shewed me at a distance, who told him of the death of a son, and also that a party from Fasil's army was coming; that, being afraid, he consulted his serpent, who ate readily and heartily, from which he knew no harm was to befall him from us. I asked him if he could prevail on the spirit to appear to me? He said he could not venture to make this request. If he thought he would appear to me, if, in the evening, I sat under that tree alone? he said he believed not. He said he was of a very graceful figure and appearance; he thought rather older than middle age; but he seldom chose to look at his face; he had a long white beard, his cloaths not like theirs, of leather, but like silk, of the fashion of the country. I asked him how he was certain it was not a man? he laughed, or rather sneered, shaking his head, and saying, No, no, it is no man, but a spirit. I asked him then what spirit he thought it was? he said it was *of the river*, it was God, the Father of mankind; but I never could bring him to be more explicit. I then desired to know why he prayed against thunder. He said, because it was hurtful to the bees, their great revenue being honey and wax: then, why he prayed for serpents? he replied, Because they taught him the coming of good or evil. It seems they have all several of these creatures in their neighbourhood, and the richer sort always in their houses, whom they take care of, and feed before they undertake a journey, or any affair of consequence. They take this animal from his hole, and put butter and milk before him, of which he is

extravagantly fond; if he does not eat, ill-fortune is near at hand.

NANNA GEORGIS, chief of the Agows of Banja, a man of the greatest consideration at Gondar, both with the king and Ras Michael, and my particular friend, as I had kept him in my house, and attended him in his sickness, after the campaign of 1769, confessed to me his apprehensions that he should die, because the serpent did not eat upon his leaving his house to come to Gondar. He was, indeed, very ill of the low country fever, and very much alarmed; but he recovered, and returned home, by Ras Michael's order, to gather the Agows together against Waragna Fasil; which he did, and soon after, he and other seven chiefs of the Agows were slain at the battle of Banja; so here the serpent's warning was verified by a second trial, though it failed in the first.

BEFORE an invasion of the Galla, or an inroad of the enemy, they say these serpents disappear, and are nowhere to be found. Fasil, the sagacious and cunning governor of the country, was, as it was said, greatly addicted to this species of divination, in so much as never to mount his horse, or go from home, if an animal of this kind, which he had in his keeping, refused to eat.

THE Shum's name was Kefla Abay, or Servant of the river; he was a man about seventy, not very lean, but infirm, fully as much so as might have been expected from that age. He conceived that he might have had eighty-four or eighty-five children. That honourable charge which he possessed had been in his family from the beginning of the world,



world, as he imagined. Indeed, if all his predecessors had as numerous families as he, there was no probability of the succession devolving to strangers. He had a long white beard, and very moderately thick; an ornament rare in Abyssinia, where they have seldom any hair upon their chin. He had round his body a skin wrapt and tied with a broad belt: I should rather say it was an ox's hide; but it was so scraped, and rubbed, and manufactured, that it was of the consistence and appearance of shamoy, only browner in colour. Above this he wore a cloak with the hood up, and covering his head; he was, bare-legged, but had sandals, much like those upon ancient statues; these, however, he put off as soon as ever he approached the bog where the Nile rises, which we were all likewise obliged to do. We were allowed to drink the water, but make no other use of it. None of the inhabitants of Geesh wash themselves, or their cloaths, in the Nile, but in a stream that falls from the mountain of Geesh down into the plain of Affoa, which runs south, and meets the Nile in its turn northward, passing the country of the Gafats and Gongas.

THE Agows, in whose country the Nile rises, are, in point of number, one of the most considerable nations in Abyssinia; when their whole force is raised, which seldom happens, they can bring to the field 4000 horse, and a great number of foot; they were, however, once much more powerful; several unsuccessful battles, and the perpetual inroads of the Galla, have much diminished their strength. The country, indeed, is still full of inhabitants, but from their history we learn, that one clan, called Zeegam, maintained singly a war against the king himself, from the time of Socinios to that of Yafous the Great, who, after all, overcame

overcame them by surprise and stratagem; and that another clan, the Denguis, in like manner maintained the war against Facilidas, Hannes I. and Yafous II. all of them active princes. Their riches, however, are still greater than their power, for though their province in length is no where 60 miles, nor half that in breadth, yet Gondar and all the neighbouring country depend for the necessaries of life, cattle, honey, butter, wheat, hides, wax, and a number of such articles, upon the Agows, who come constantly in succession, a thousand and fifteen hundred at a time, loaded with these commodities, to the capital.

As the dependence upon the Agows is for their produce rather than on the forces of their country, it has been a maxim with wise princes to compound with them for an additional tribute, instead of their military service; the necessities of the times have sometimes altered these wise regulations, and between their attachment to Fasil, and afterwards to Ras Michael, they have been very much reduced, whereby the state hath suffered.

It will naturally occur, that, in a long carriage, such as that of a hundred miles in such a climate, butter must melt, and be in a state of fusion, consequently very near putrefaction; this is prevented by the root of an herb, called Moc-moco, yellow in colour, and in shape nearly resembling a carrot; this they bruise and mix with their butter, and a very small quantity preserves it fresh for a considerable time; and this is a great saving and convenience, for, supposing salt was employed, it is very doubtful if it would answer the intention; besides, salt is a money in this country,

try, being circulated in the form of wedges, or bricks ; it serves the purpose of silver coin, and is the change of gold ; so that this herb is of the utmost use in preventing the increase in price of this necessary article, which is the principal food of all ranks of people in this country. Brides paint their feet likewise from the ankle downwards, as also their nails and palms of their hands, with this drug. I brought with me into Europe a large quantity of the seed resembling that of coriander, and dispersed it plentifully through all the royal gardens : whether it has succeeded or not I cannot say.

BESIDES the market of Gondar, the neighbouring black savages, the woolly-headed Shangalla, purchase the greatest part of these commodities from them, and many others, which they bring from the capital when they return thence ; they receive in exchange elephants teeth, rhinoceros horns, gold in small pellets, and a quantity of very fine cotton ; of which goods they might receive a much greater quantity were they content to cultivate trade in a fair way, without making inroads upon these savages for the sake of slaves, and thereby disturbing them in their occupations of seeking for gold and hunting the elephant.

THE way this trade, though very much limited, is established, is by two nations sending their children mutually to each other ; there is then peace between those two families which have such hostages ; these children often intermarry ; after which that family is understood to be protected, and at peace, perhaps, for a generation : but such instances are rare, the natural propensity of both nations being to these

and plunder; into these they always relapse; mutual enmity follows in consequence.

THE country of the Agows, called Agow Midrè, from its elevation, must be of course temperate and wholesome; the days, indeed, are hot, even at Sacala, and, when exposed to the sun, we are sensible of a scorching heat; but whenever you are seated in the shade, or in a house, the temperature is cool, as there is a constant breeze which makes the sun tolerable even at mid-day, though we are here but 10° from the Line, or a few minutes more.

THOUGH these Agows are so fortunate in their climate, they are not said to be long-livers; but their precise age is very difficult to ascertain to any degree of exactness, as they have no fixed or known epoch to refer to; and, though their country abounds with all the necessaries of life, their taxes, tributes, and services, especially at present, are so multiplied upon them, whilst their distresses of late have been so great and frequent, that they are only the manufacturers of the commodities they sell, to satisfy these constant exorbitant demands, and cannot enjoy any part of their own produce themselves, but live in misery and penury scarce to be conceived. We saw a number of women, wrinkled and sun-burnt so as scarce to appear human, wandering about under a burning sun, with one and sometimes two children upon their back, gathering the seeds of bent grass to make a kind of bread.

THE cloathing of the Agows is all of hides, which they soften and manufacture in a method peculiar to themselves, and this they wear in the rainy season, when the weather is cold, for here the rainy seasons are of long duration, and violent, which still increases the nearer you approach the Line; for the reasons I have already assigned. The younger sort are chiefly naked, the married women carrying their children about with them upon their backs; their cloathing is like a shirt down to their feet, and girded with a belt or girdle about their middle; the lower part of it resembles a large double petticoat, one ply of which they turn back over their shoulders, fastening it with a broach, or skewer, across their breast before, and carry their children in it behind. The women are generally thin, and, like the men, below the middle size. There is no such thing as barrenness known among them. They begin to bear children before eleven; they marry generally about that age, and are marriageable two years before: they close child-bearing before they are thirty, though there are several instances to the contrary.

DENGU, Sacala, Dengla, and Geesh, are all called by the name of Ancasha, and their tribute is paid in honey. Quaquera and Azena pay honey likewise; Banja, honey and gold; Metakel, gold; Zeegam, gold. There comes from Dengla a particular kind of sheep, called Macoot, which are said to be of a breed brought from the southward of the Line; but neither sheep, butter, nor slaves make part of their tribute, being reserved for presents to the king and great men.

BESIDES what they sell, and what they pay to the governor of Damot, the Agows have a particular tribute which they present to the king, one thousand dabra of honey, each dabra containing about sixty pounds weight, being a large earthen vessel. They pay, moreover, fifteen hundred oxen and 1000 ounces of gold: formerly the number of jars of honey was four thousand, but several of these villages being daily given to private people by the king, the quantity is diminished by the quota so alienated. The butter is all sold; and, since the fatal battle of Banja, the king's share comes only to about one thousand jars. The officer that keeps the accounts, and sees the rents paid, is called Agow Miziker\*; his post is worth one thousand ounces of gold; and by this it may be judged with what oeconomy this revenue is collected. This post is generally the next to the governor of Damot, but not of course; they are separate provinces, and united only by the special grant of the king.

ALTHOUGH I had with me two large tents sufficient for my people, I was advised to take possession of the houses to secure our mules and horses from thieves in the night, as also from the assaults of wild beasts, of which this country is full. Almost every small collection of houses has behind it a large cave, or subterraneous dwelling, dug in the rock, of a prodigious capacity, and which must have been the work of great labour. It is not possible, at this distance of time, to say whether these caverns were the ancient habitation of the Agows when they were Troglodytes, or whether they

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\* Accountant of the Agows.

they were intended for retreats upon any alarm of an irruption of the Galla into their country.

At the same time I must observe, that all the clans, or districts of the Agows, have the whole mountains of their country perforated in caves like these; even the clans of Zeegam and Quaquera, the first of which, from its power arising from the populous state of the country, and the number of horses it breeds, seems to have no reason to fear the irregular invasions of naked and ill-armed savages such as are the Galla. The country of Zeegam, however, which has but few mountains, hath many of these caverns, one range above another, in every mountain belonging to them. Quaquera, indeed, borders upon the Shangalla; as these are all foot, perfectly contiguous, and separated by the river, the caverns were probably intended as retreats for cattle and women against the attacks of those barbarians, which were every minute to be apprehended.

In the country of the Tcheratz Agow, the mountains are all excavated like these in Damot, although they have no Galla for their neighbours whose invasions they need be afraid of. Lalibala, indeed, their great king and saint, about the twelfth century, converted many of these caves into churches, as if he had considered them as formerly the receptacles of Pagan superstition. At the same time, it is not improbable that these caverns were made use of for religious purposes; that of Geesh, for instance, was probably, in former times, a place of secret worship paid to the river, because of that use it still is, not only to the inhabitants of the village, but to the assembly of the clans in general, who, after the ceremonies I have already spoken of, retire, and

then perform their sacred ceremonies, to which none but the heads of families in the Agows country are ever admitted.

WHEN I shewed our landlord, Kefla' Abay, the dog-star, (Syrius) he knew it perfectly, saying it was Seir, it was the star of the river, the messenger or star of the convocation of the tribes, or of the feast; but I could not observe he ever prayed to it, or looked at it otherwise than one does to a dial, nor mentioned it with the respect he did the Abay; nor did he shew any sort of attention to the planets, or to any other star whatever.

ON the 9th of November, having finished my memorandum relating to these remarkable places, I traced again on foot the whole course of this river from its source to the plain of Goutto. I was unattended by any one, having with me only two hunting dogs, and my gun in my hand. The quantity of game of all sorts, especially the deer kind, was, indeed, surprising; but though I was, as usual, a very successful sportsman, I was obliged, for want of help, to leave each deer where he fell. They sleep in the wild oats, and do not rise till you are about to tread upon them, and then stare at you for half a minute before they attempt to run off.

THE only mention I shall make of the natural productions of this place comes the more properly in here, as it relates to my account of the religion of this people. In the writings of the Jesuits, the Agows are said to worship *canes*\*; but

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\* See a very remarkable letter of Ras Sela Christos to the emperor Socinios, in Balthazar Tellez, tom. 2. p. 496.



but of this I could find no traces among them. I saw no plant of this kind in their whole country, excepting some large bamboo-trees. This plant, in the Agows language, is called Krihaha. It grows in great quantity upon the sides of the precipice of Geesh, and helps to conceal the cavern we have already mentioned; but though we cut several pieces of these canes, they shewed no sort of emotion, nor to be the least interested in what we were doing.

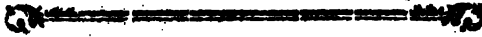
OUR business being now done, nothing remained but to depart. We had passed our time in perfect harmony; the address of Woldo, and the great attachment of our friend Irepone, had kept our house in a cheerful abundance. We had lived, it is true, too magnificently for philosophers, but neither idly nor riotously; and I believe never will any *sovereign* of Geesh be again so popular, or reign over his subjects with greater mildness. I had practised medicine gratis, and killed, for three days successively, a cow each day for the poor and the neighbours. I had cloathed the high priest of the Nile from head to foot, as also his two sons, and had decorated two of his daughters with beads of all the colours of the rainbow, adding every other little present they seemed fond of, or that we thought would be agreeable. As for our amiable Irepone, we had reserved for her the choicest of our presents, the most valuable of every article we had with us, and a large proportion of every one of them; we gave her, besides, some gold; but she, more generous and nobler in her sentiments than us, seemed to pay little attention to these that announced to her the separation from her friend; she tore her fine hair, which she had every day before braided in a newer and more graceful manner; she threw herself upon

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the ground in the house, and refused to see us mount on horseback, or take our leave, and came not to the door till we were already set out, then followed us with her good-wishes and her eyes as far as she could see or be heard.

I took my leave of Kefla Abay, the venerable priest of the most famous river in the world, who recommended me with great earnestness to the care of his god, which, as Strates humorously enough observed, meant nothing less than he hoped the devil would take me. All the young men in the village, with lances and shields, attended us to Saint Michael Sacala, that is, to the borders of their country, and end of my little sovereignty.



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# R E G I S T E R

OF THE

## QUANTITY OF RAIN-WATER,

*IN INCHES AND DECIMALS,*

WHICH FELL AT GONDAR, IN ABYSSINIA, IN THE YEAR 1770,  
THROUGH A FUNNEL OF ONE FOOT ENGLISH IN DIAMETER.

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The rain began this year on the first of March : there fell } INCHES.  
in showers, that lasted only a few minutes, between the }  
1st of March and the last of April,                                 -         -         - } .039

M A Y.

1.	FROM the 1st to the 6th,	-         -         -	.039
	From the 6th to the 8th,	-         -         -	.120
	From the 10th to the 12th it rained chiefly in the night,	-         -         -	.711
	From the 12th to the 14th,	-         -         -	.123
19.	At four in the afternoon a small shower, but heavy rain in the night,	-         -         -	.526
21.	At 7 o'clock in the evening a small shower, which con- tinued moderately through the night,	-         -	.171
27.	At 6 in the evening heavy rain for an hour,	-         -	.540
VOL. III.		5 B	29. At

MAY.

INCHES.

29. At 3 in the afternoon frequent showers of light rain.	
It continued one hour 30 minutes,	.487
Total rain in May,	2.717

## J U N E.

1. At 12 noon, light rain for 15 minutes,	.028
2. Between 12 o'clock night it has rained 30 minutes, in small showers, which lasted 5 or 6 minutes at a time,	.049
4. At 8 in the morning slight showers for 30 minutes,	.014
5. Between 6 and 10 in the morning four small showers, that lasted 32 minutes, and at 12 a very gentle rain that lasted 15 minutes,	.031
10. It has rained very violently for 6 hours 30 minutes,	.342
11. Between 2 and 6 in the afternoon, at three several times, it has rained 20 minutes,	.014
12. At noon a violent rain for one hour 30 minutes. At half past 1 in the afternoon light rain for an hour. At 4 afternoon, light rain for 30 minutes. At half past six same afternoon, a very gentle rain for 3 hours,	.421
13. Between 4 and 5 afternoon it rained twice for 15 minutes, but not perceptible in the recipient,	—
16. Between 2 and 6 afternoon it has rained three times smart showers, in all about 20 minutes,	.033
17. There fell in the night small rain for an hour,	.002
18. At 1 afternoon there was a strong shower for 15 minutes. At half past 1 another for 45 minutes. Same day at 6 afternoon, it rained at intervals for 2 hours,	.750
19. At half after 2 afternoon it began to rain violently with intervals. At night a slight shower for 20 minutes,	.118
20. At twelve noon there was a very slight shower for 6 minutes. At half past 5, same day, a small shower that lasted 30 minutes. At 8 o'clock evening it began to rain smartly at intervals for 4 hours,	.171
21. At a quarter past 11 it rained violently with thunder and lightning for about 2 hours. At half past 4 in the evening	

## JUNE.

INCHES.

	evening it rained, with intervals, in all about 45 minutes,	-	-	.330.
22.	At half past 12 noon, it rained an hour,	-	-	.175
23.	At one o'clock afternoon light showers for 2 hours.			
	Heavy rain in the night for 4 hours,	-	-	.358
25.	At a quarter past one afternoon, a small shower, which lasted one hour 35 minutes. At night it rained one hour 30 minutes; heavy rain with thunder and lightning,			.552
26.	At two in the afternoon, violent rain with intervals for 30 minutes. At half past five it rained for 30 minutes; and the beginning of the night for three hours,	-	-	.233
27.	At a quarter past twelve, a small shower for one hour 45 minutes, and at night a moderate shower,	-	-	.302
28.	At half past twelve, a gentle rain. At 50 minutes after twelve, violent. At two in the afternoon very gentle rain for 15 minutes; and at 7, moderate rain for one hour and 30 minutes,	-	-	.290
29.	At 1 in the afternoon, light rain, but a heavy rain must have fallen somewhere else, as the river Kahha is overflowed,	-	-	.092
30.	At noon a very gentle rain for 15 minutes,	-	-	.002
Total rain in June,				4.307

## J U L Y.

1.	At 20 minutes past eleven, strong rain for 30 minutes, with some showers through the night,	-	-	.306
2.	At half past eleven, a small shower for 30 minutes, and then, at twelve, a violent shower, wind south-west, for 45 minutes,	-	-	.792
3.	It rained at four in the afternoon, and in the night,	-	-	.311
4.	It rained from twelve to two, and in the night likewise,	-	-	.390
5.	It rained at noon, and some in the night,	-	-	.029
7.	It rained and hailed violently. It rained in the night likewise,	-	-	1.686
8.	Light rain in the night,	-	-	.038
5 B 2				
9. Light				

JULY.

INCHES.

9.	Light rain for a few minutes, and no more all day; but the river Kahha has suddenly overflowed, and there is appearance of rain on the Mountain of the Sun,	.017
10.	No rain, - - - - -	—
11.	Ditto, - - - - -	—
12.	At half an hour past noon it rained violently,	.422
13.	Violent rain at mid-day, and also in the night	1.185
14.	A few light showers night and day, - -	.054
15.	A small shower in the evening, and another in the night,	.251
16.	No rain, - - - - -	—
17.	A small shower at one in the afternoon, and flying showers throughout the day. It rained at ten at night violently, - - -	.658
18.	A gentle shower at noon, but continued raining in the night, - - -	.463
19.	Light showers all the night, - - -	.237
20.	It rained all night till eight o'clock next morning,	.714
21.	Light showers in the afternoon, but violent rain in the night, - - -	1.329
22.	Light showers in the evening, - - -	.174
23.	It rained one shower at half past ten in the morning,	.107
24.	Light showers night and day, - - -	.226
25.	Light rains and frequent, - - -	.015
26.	Light showers throughout the evening, - -	.081
27.	Light rains, - - - - -	.148
28.	Flying showers, - - - - -	.070
29.	Ditto, - - - - -	.081
30.	Light showers, - - - - -	.013
31.	Flying light showers night and day, - - -	.292

Total rain in July, 10.089

## AUGUST.

1.	Light rain in the afternoon, - - -	.056
2.	It rained in the night smartly, - - -	.329
3.	It rained at noon violently, - - -	1.318
4.	It rained from mid-day to evening, and some showers in the night, - - -	1.723

5. At

## AUGUST.

INCHES.

5. At 2 in the afternoon it began to rain violently for 2 hours,	-	-	1.042
6. Smart showers at different times in the evening and night,	-	-	.490
7. It rained in the night,	-	-	.580
8. Light rain in the night,	-	-	.053.
9. Flying showers through the day, but for 6 minutes. Evening very violent,	-	-	.186
10. Smart showers in the evening and night,	-	-	.342
11. & 12. Frequent showers, with a high wind,	-	-	1.184
13. & 14. Light rain the first day, but violent on the second,	-	-	1.423
15. Fair all day, but rained at night,	-	-	.475
16. Flying showers night and day,	-	-	.144
17. A very violent shower of short duration,	-	-	.371
18. & 19. Several small showers,	-	-	.609
20. & 21. Frequent light showers,	-	-	.236
22. & 23. Constant rain,	-	-	1.502
24. Frequent showers in the evening,	-	-	.306
25. & 26. Constant rain,	-	-	1.763
27. Frequent showers,	-	-	.289
28. Ditto,	-	-	.289
29. It rained in the night,	-	-	.355
30. Ditto,	-	-	.302
31. Ditto,	-	-	.211
Total rain in August,			15.569

## S E P T E M B E R.

1. It rained in the night,	-	-	.079
2. Ditto,	-	-	.107
3. & 4. Frequent showers night and day,	-	-	.358
5. & 6. Ditto,	-	-	.568
7. It rained in the night only,	-	-	.213
8. No rain,	-	-	-----
9. It rained violently for a few minutes at 8 in the Evening,	-	-	.055
10. No rain,	-	-	-----
11. It rained in the night only,	-	-	.227
12. It rained smartly in the night,	-	-	.566
13. No	-	-	

( 75° )

SEPT.

INCHES.

13.	No rain,	-	-	_____
14.	Light showers in the day,	-	-	.042
15.	Frequent showers night and day,	-	-	.159
16.	It rained a little in the night,	-	-	.132
18.	No rain,	-	-	_____
19.	Ditto,	-	-	_____
20.	Flying showers night and day,	-	-	.263
21.	No rain,	-	-	_____
22.	Ditto,	-	-	_____
23.	Some rain in the night,	-	-	.039
24.	Ditto,	-	-	.026
25.	The rain ceased,	-	-	_____

Total rain in September, 2.834

N. B. This is the festival of the Crofs in Egypt, when the inundation begins to abate. It rains no more in Abyffinia till towards the beginning of November, and then only for a few days; but these are the rains Abyffinia cannot want for their latter crops, and it was for these the Agows prayed when we were at the fountains of the Nile the 5th of November 1770.

STATE



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# S T A T E

OF THE

## QUANTITY OF RAIN-WATER,

WHICH FELL IN ABYSSINIA AT KOSCAM, THE QUEEN'S PALACE.

IN 1771, DURING THE RAINY MONTHS,

THROUGH A FUNNEL OF ONE FOOT ENGLISH IN DIAMETER, AS IN

THE PRECEDING YEAR 1770.

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### F E B R U A R Y.

	INCHES.
23. THIS day it rained, for the first time, from a quarter before four o'clock afternoon to half past four ditto, - -	.003
28. It rained in the night one hour and a quarter,	.001

### M A R C H.

4. It rained in the night near two hours small rain,	.042
7. It rained a small shower in the evening,	.014
12. It rained three quarters of an hour this afternoon,	.017
24. It rained and hailed violently for 18 minutes in the night, - -	.017
29. It	

( 752 )

MARCH.

INCHES.

29. It rained an hour and a half in the afternoon,	.066
30. It rained hard in the night, -	.504
	<hr/>
Total rain in February and March,	.664

A P R I L.

3. It rained, or rather hailed, nine minutes,	<hr/>
5. It rained an hour in the afternoon, -	.067
8. Small rain at intervals throughout the afternoon,	.002
10. It rained an hour in the night, -	.003
30. It rained one hour and a quarter in the night,	.013
	<hr/>
Total rain in April,	.085

M A Y.

1. From the 31st ult. to this day, at different times,	.330
3. It rained hard in the night, - -	.355
6. It has rained violently since three in the afternoon, wind S. E. variable, - -	.095
7. It has rained heavily in the night, wind varying from N. to S. and S. W. -	.368
8. It rained small rain in the afternoon,	.042
11. It has rained small rain this afternoon, wind N. W.	.002
14. It has rained since yesterday at three all night, and till noon to-day, - -	.675
27. From yesterday at two P. M. it rained to half past six, and heavily most part of the night, wind va- rying from N. to S. - -	.634
	<hr/>
Total rain in May,	2.501

## J U N E.

	INCHES.
1. From yesterday at noon, in the night, and this day, wind W. S. W.	.212
3. At night, fouth,	.002
5. It rained in the night, S. W.	.223
6. Ditto,	.006
9. It rained in the night and afternoon, wind W. by S.	.725
10. Ditto,	.463
11. It rained in the night,	.343
13. It rained from the 12th, at noon, to the 13th at ten, S. S. W.	1.265
14. It rained from three till seven,	.120
15. It rained last night from sun-set till midnight, S.	.160
N. B. The 16th at night, is the day the Egyptians say the Nile ferments, and is troubled, by falling of the nucta.	
18. After three days fair, wind fresh, N. it began to rain yesterday, and rained three quarters of an hour, wind varying from north to west,	.490
19. It rained with intervals from four to ten last night, wind north, varying by east to south, and south-west, where it fell calm, and rained violently,	.530
20. It rained from a quarter before six, till ten at night, wind at north, fresh; changed to east, then to south, and there fell calm; violent thunder and lightning,	.635
21. It began to rain yesterday at three, and rained till near five; wind changed from north to south, and fell calm; cleared with wind at north,	.550
22. It began to rain at three, and rained till five; wind changed from north to east, then to south, and fell calm; cleared with wind at north; fair all night,	.149
25. It has been fair till yesterday evening: at three it began	

JUNE.		INCHES.
	began raining, and rained till five this morning, a few drops; wind north,	.067
26.	It rained small rain at several times yesterday afternoon, and a few drops this morning, wind N. calm; at ten it came to south and then to west,	.120
27.	It rained yesterday afternoon from four to five; wind changed from north to west, but speedily returned to north, fresh,	.054
28. & 29.	It rained the 27th in the afternoon and in the night, wind at north. Yesterday it rained small rain all day till five, and cleared in the night, with wind at north,	.268
Total rain in June,		6.388

## J U L Y.

1.	There fell small showers the night of the 29th and of the 30th,	.093
3.	There fell a small shower the second in the afternoon, and last night hard,	.267
4.	It rained small rain at noon. From two, and all night, heavy and constant rain. It thundered from noon till three,	.373
5.	It rained all yesterday afternoon, and by intervals, till nine at night. Small rain this morning; calm; W. S. W. and S. W.	.423
6.	It rained yesterday afternoon and in the night; S. W.	.489

N. B. The 6th of July is the first of the month Hamlie, and of the Egyptian month Abib. It is this day they first begin to cry the Nile's increase in the streets of Cairo. The night before, or 30th of Scanne, is called at Cairo the Eide el Bisfaara, or the eve of good news, because, after having measured at the Mikeas, they come and tell at Cairo that to-morrow they begin to count the Nile's rising.

7. It

## JULY.

INCHES.

7.	It rained from two in the afternoon till four, and from ten till midnight,	-	.318
10.	It rained yesternight, and in the afternoon and night the day before,	-	.289
11.	It rained till yesterday afternoon: in the night a violent shower that lasted 29 minutes; wind south by west,	-	1.162
12.	It rained a little from two to three in the afternoon, but in the night violently for a short time,	-	.319
13.	It rained yesterday from three quarters past twelve till midnight; W. S. W. calm,	-	.912
14.	It rained all yesterday afternoon till midnight,	-	.739
15.	It rained the 14th in the afternoon, and the 15th a few showers through the day,	-	.816
16.	It rained in the night, and small rain in the afternoon,	-	.290
17.	It rained in the afternoon two showers, and in the night a little; S. W.	-	.212
19.	It rained in the afternoon the 17th and 18th, and the 18th only in the night,	-	.912
20.	It rained yesterday from two till half past ten constant rain, and the hail lay all the afternoon on the hills S. E. of the town; very cold wind; S. by W.	-	1.371
21. & 22.	It rained but one small shower the 20th, the 21st it rained little in the afternoon, but hard in the night,	-	1.185
24.	It rained in the morning of yesterday only, fair in the afternoon; to-day, in the morning, fair in the night,	-	.766
25.	It rained all yesterday afternoon, and all this morning small rain, but none in the night,	-	.452
28.	From the 25th in the afternoon to this day at noon,	-	2.137
29.	From the 28th at noon to the 29th it rained in the first part of the night, but was fair all afternoon and this morning,	-	.267
	From the 29th at noon, to the 31st at ditto,	-	.568

Total rain in July,

14.360

5 C 2

AUGUST.

## AUGUST.

1. It rained yesterday afternoon, but in the night little. To day fair,	.544
4. It rained only the third in the evening, and night and this morning,	1.188
5. It rained yesterday evening and in the night, till noon little,	.544
6. It rained yesterday afternoon, and all night, and a little this morning,	.250
8. It was fair these two days, and only rained one hard shower last night,	.178
9. It rained last night only, was fair all day, and is this morning,	.214
10. It rained yesterday all the afternoon, and the first of the night. To-day fair,	.869
11. It rained in the night yesterday; all day and this morning fair,	.188
12. It rained a small shower yesterday afternoon, and in the night a little,	.268
13. It rained yesterday at three a hard shower, and a little in the night,	.188
14. It rained a few drops in the day, and a hard shower at night,	.300
15. It rained a hard shower near three, and at ten at night,	.385
16. In the night,	.027
17. It rained hard several times in the evening and night,	.831
18. It rained hard yesterday afternoon, and in the night,	.329
19. It rained all day, but not hard,	.491
20. It rained in the afternoon only,	.010
21. Ditto,	.097
22. It was fair all yesterday, and rained only a hard shower at 9,	.424
23. It rained hard at noon, and the evening, with little in-	

## AUGUST.

INCHES.

	intervals, till 9 at night, and again this morning at sun-set till 7,	-	1.148
24.	It did not rain yesterday,	-	—
25.	It rained an hour between two and three,	-	.332
26.	It rained a small shower yesterday, and none in the night,	-	.005
27.	It rained a hard shower at four, and this day at 12 morning, the night clear,	-	.268
28.	It rained hard yesterday at 2 for a few minutes,	-	.201
29.	It rained a hard shower for near an hour, after two, but clear all night and this morning,	-	.450
30. & 31.	It rained a small shower the 30th, and heavily for a quarter of an hour the 31st, at night, at ten,	-	.109
Total rain in August,			10.019

## S E P T E M B E R.

2.	It rained yesterday a hard shower in the evening, and at ten at night,	-	.664
3.	It rained only a few drops, which did not appear in the funnel,	-	—
4.	It rained from noon till sun-set yesterday, with hard and violent thunder : night fair,	-	1.739
N.B. It is observed at Gondar, the Pagomen is always rainy. It begins this year the 4th, and consists of six days, being Leap Year.			
5.	It rained yesterday all afternoon, small rain,	-	.399
6.	It rained yesterday all afternoon, and small rain in the night till ten,	-	.306
7.	It rained from before noon till four, small rain; the night fair. Wind high at north,	-	.846
8.	It rained from noon for an hour, small rain,	-	.214
9.	It	-	

## SEPTEMBER.

INCHES.

9. It rained a small shower at noon ; clouds drive from east to west ; wind north,	-	.107
10. Saint John's day, no rain,	-	—
11. It rained from noon till five o'clock, wind W. cold ; clouds drive from east and west,		1.135
12. It rained a shower a little before noon. Clouds drive from east and from west,		.214
13. It rained a small shower a little after noon. Cold and calm. Clouds drive from east and west,		.035
14. It rained small rain from noon to three, and hard from eleven till near midnight,	-	.344
15. It was fair all yesterday, but rained hard for a few minutes at seven, and also a little before midnight, from the east,	-	.186
16. No rain to-day,	-	—
18. It rained a small shower last night, and to-day at noon,	-	.053
19. It rained and hailed violently in the afternoon,		1.096

Total rain in September, 7.338

The rain totally ceased the 19th, none having fallen from this day to the 25th.

Saint John's day is the time observed for the rains beginning to abate.

N. B. At the 5th of October the people were all crying for rain ; the ground all in cracks, and tuff in the blade burnt up.

TOTAL



**TOTAL of RAIN that fell in ABySSINIA in the Years 1770 and 1771, in the Rainy Months.**

G O N D A R.			K O S C A M.		
1770.			1771.		
March	}	INCHES.	February,	}	INCHES.
&			&		
April,	}	.039	March,	}	.664
May,		2.717	April,		.085
June,		4.307	May,		2.501
July,		10.080	June,		6.388
August,		15.569	July,		14.360
September,		2.834	August,	}	10.019
			September,		7.338
		<hr/> 35.555			<hr/> 41.355

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.











